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GEORGE ELIOT READER



THE
GEORGE ELIOT READER

EDITED, AND WITH INTRODUCTION

BY

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'A SCHOOL HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE,' ETC.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
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INTRODUCTION.

I.

As the extracts in this volume are taken from the works of a great novelist—a woman who wrote under the name of “George Eliot”—it will be well, before describing her life and work, to understand clearly something of the origin of the form of literature we call the novel, what we exactly mean by a novel, and what are the qualities that go to the making of a great novel.

The love of stories is as old as the human race. They were sung or recited, and eagerly listened to, in days when the arts of reading and writing were known only to the few. They have formed one of the greatest sources of recreation always among all peoples. In our own literature stories pure and simple have played a large part from the very earliest times. Except that they are in verse, and that the proper vehicle of the novel is prose, Layamon’s ‘Brut’ and Chaucer’s ‘Canterbury Tales’ might almost be regarded as our first novels. Chaucer’s insight into human character, his humour, and his power of telling a tale in such a way that it cannot fail to interest, are qualities that go to the making of every novelist of worth.

The first regular prose stories in our literature are to be found in Sir Thomas Malory's 'Morte d'Arthur,' printed by Caxton in 1485. They are Celtic in origin, and differ from the tales of action, the records of deeds, introduced to this country by the Normans. Although barbarous combats and bloodshed fill a considerable space in the Arthurian tales, acts of humanity and courtesy are mingled with them. Such varied emotions as pity, love, anger, and pride, play their parts and determine the deeds and words of the characters.

2

The spacious times of great Elizabeth saw the production of many prose romances and tales, and of some stories that depicted real life. But, curiously enough, those works had slight influence on the modern novel as we know it, which is a development of the Italian *novella*, and the French *nouvelle*,—a short tale, generally amusing, and professedly drawn from real life. Daniel Defoe, the author of 'Robinson Crusoe,' published in 1719, is our first novelist in the modern acceptation of the term, for in all his books he pretends to recount something that actually happened.

In its beginnings, then, the novel was a piece of realistic narrative based on experience. The next step was to add to the mere narrative the humoristic portrayal of manners, a part of the novelist's business which rapidly developed. Samuel Richardson (1689-1761) was the first to make the novel a study of psychological analysis—that is, he tried to show what was passing in the minds and hearts of his characters. Henry Fielding (1707-1754) first introduced the custom of philosophising comment; and Laurence Sterne (1713-1768) treated his novels as the framework on which to hang any sort of miscellaneous moralising. Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) united the romance with the novel, and

was the first to introduce historical characters with fine effect, and to place his imaginary persons in a historical setting. In the present day the novel has come to mean almost anything in the form of a prose narrative that is not historically true.

As a form of literature the novel is of the very highest importance. It both reflects and influences human life. Mr Leslie Stephen has defined it "as substantially the embodiment of the remarks made by the ablest observers upon their contemporaries"; and thus novels come to be an excellent historical guide to the social life of the time in which they are written. Great men like Francis Bacon have ranked fiction higher than history; and we must all admit that we owe to fiction some of our pleasantest hours of recreation, and that several of the characters of fiction are included among our most valued and sympathetic friends. To adapt some lines of the poet Crabbe, novels give

"New views to life, and teach us how to live;
They soothe the grieved, the stubborn they chastise,
Fools they admonish, and confirm the wise:
Their aid they yield to all: they never shun
The man of sorrow, nor the wretch undone:
Unlike the hard, the selfish, and the proud,
They fly not sullen from the suppliant crowd;
Nor tell to various people various things,
But show to subjects what they show to kings."

Fiction is the only creative art in which women have excelled or equalled men. We cannot name any woman who is a poet, a musical composer, a painter, a sculptor, a dramatist of first rank, but we may point with pride to a triumvirate of novelists, Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë, and George Eliot, who rank with the highest in their art

in all lands. It would be idle, and in this place wholly unnecessary, to attempt to account for the fact. We have only to be glad that we are able to enjoy the work of three such story-tellers and delineators of human character.

II.

Mary Anne Evans—for such was George Eliot's real name—was born at Arbury Farm, Warwickshire, November 22, 1819. It is pleasant to remember that Stratford-on-Avon, Shakespeare's birthplace, was only some twenty miles off. Her father, Isaac Evans, was agent for Francis Newdigate of Arbury Hall, the Cheverel Manor of 'Mr Gilfil's Love-Story.'¹ Her childish days are to some extent recorded in 'The Mill on the Floss'; and the relations between Tom and Maggie Tulliver are not unlike those between herself and her brother Isaac.² She was in the habit of accompanying her father on his rounds, and thus early became familiar with the scenery and characteristics of the Midlands, which she has so admirably described in her novels.³

As a girl she had a passion for reading. She attended three schools, dispensing, however, with all regular education at the age of sixteen. Later she studied Italian and German, Greek and Latin. Her first piece of literary work was the translation from the German of Strauss's 'Life of Jesus' (1849). She then contributed articles to, and eventually helped to edit, the 'Westminster Review,' a quarterly magazine of philosophical and radical principles. Her first attempt in fiction was a story entitled 'The Sad

¹ Cf. pp. 167-174.

² Cf. pp. 10-97.

³ Cf. pp. 1-9; 110-118.

Fortunes of the Rev. Amos Barton.' This was followed by 'Mr Gilfil's Love-Story' and 'Janet's Repentance.' Each was published in 'Blackwood's Magazine' in 1857, and issued together the next year in a volume entitled 'Scenes of Clerical Life.' It was at once evident that a new writer of exceeding power, possessing, as has been well said, "humour, pathos, vivid presentation, nice observation," had arisen. Her first long novel, 'Adam Bede,' appeared in 1859, the 'Mill on the Floss' in 1860, and 'Silas Marner' in 1861. Those books, perhaps, contain her best work. In 'Romola,' a historical novel, published in 1863, George Eliot forsook England for Italy, and, at immense cost of labour learned enough of the history of the land to present a very vivacious picture of fifteenth-century Florence. It contains one character, that of a man, which is a wonderful study of the way in which a human being may drift into terrible wrongdoing and cause the greatest suffering to those around him, without in the beginning intending any course of wickedness, merely by considering his own pleasure and what he erroneously took to be the best way of making an easy position for himself in the world. 'Felix Holt' appeared in 1866; 'Middlemarch,' which will doubtless always rank among her greatest achievements, in 1872; and her last novel, 'Daniel Deronda,' in 1876. With her work as poet and essayist — of considerably less value than her work as novelist — we are not here concerned. She died in London, December 22, 1880, and was buried in Highgate Cemetery.

III.

All great novelists have drawn on their own experience, some less, some more ; and George Eliot is no exception to the rule. In *Caleb Garth*¹ and *Adam Bede*² we may see something of her father ; in *Maggie and Tom Tulliver*, as we have already indicated, something of herself and her brother ; and such persons as Mrs Poyser,³ the aunt, and uncles in the ' *Mill on the Floss*,'⁴ and Bartle Massey,⁵ she had known in real life, or at least people very like them. But it is given to each one of us individually to have in our own person very few experiences ; and therefore a great novelist, like a great dramatist, must possess that unique gift of sympathy which enables him to understand, and to express in words, what other people feel and think—the gift that is, indeed, nothing less than genius. That quality George Eliot possessed in the highest degree. By her genius she has endowed her imaginary characters with life, and after a short acquaintance with them in the pages of her books they become for us real persons.

Perhaps George Eliot's greatest originality consists in the vein of humour peculiar to her. "It is," as Mr Leslie Stephen wisely observes, "the humour of a calm contemplative mind familiar with wide fields of knowledge, and capable of observing the little dramas of rustic life from a higher standing-point." She never for one moment forgets, or lets her readers forget, the proportion between the joys and sorrows of individuals and the great stream

¹ Cf. pp. 233-239.

² Cf. pp. 137-141.

³ Cf. pp. 174-186.

⁴ Cf. pp. 49-74.

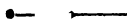
⁵ Cf. pp. 160-166.

of human thought and deed in the hurrying torrent of the universe.

English novelists have often been accused of concealing sermons in their novels. Every great work of art—and a great novel is a great work of art—unconsciously teaches a moral in the sense that whatever possesses at once beauty and truth must act as a power for good in the lives of men. If we read rightly George Eliot's novels we learn the importance in human life of "deliberate kindness, of careful truth, of unwavering endeavour," and that

"If each for each be all he can,
A very God is man to man."

GEORGE ELIOT READER.



I. ENGLAND, 1800-1830.

a.

FIVE-AND-THIRTY years ago the glory had not yet departed from the old coach-roads: the great roadside inns were still brilliant with well-polished tankards, the smiling glances of pretty barmaids, and the repartees of jocose ostlers; the mail still announced itself by the merry notes of the horn; the hedge-cutter or the rick-thatcher might still know the exact hour by the unfailing yet otherwise meteoric apparition of the pea-green Tally-ho or the yellow Independent; and elderly gentlemen in pony-chaises, quartering nervously to make way for the rolling swinging swift-ness, had not ceased to remark that times were finely changed since they used to see the pack-horses and hear the tinkling of their bells on this very highway. 10

In those days there were pocket boroughs, a Birmingham unrepresented in Parliament and compelled to make strong representations out of it, unrepealed corn-laws, three-and-sixpenny letters, a brawny and many-breeding pauper- 17

ism, and other departed evils ; but there were some pleasant things too, which have also departed. *Non omnia grandior ætas quæ fugiamus habet*, says the wise goddess : you have not the best of it in all things, O youngsters ! the elderly man has his enviable memories, and not the least of them is the memory of a long journey in mid-spring or autumn on the outside of a stage-coach. Posterity may be shot, like a bullet through a tube, by atmospheric pressure from Winchester to Newcastle : that is a fine result to have
10 among our hopes ; but the slow old-fashioned way of getting from one end of our country to the other is the better thing to have in the memory. The tube-journey can never lend much to picture and narrative ; it is as barren as an exclamatory O ! Whereas the happy outside passenger seated on the box from the dawn to the gloaming gathered enough stories of English life, enough of English labours in town and country, enough aspects of earth and sky, to make episodes for a modern Odyssey. Suppose only that his journey took him through that central plain,
20 watered at one extremity by the Avon, at the other by the Trent. As the morning silvered the meadows with their long lines of bushy willows marking the watercourses, or burnished the golden corn-ricks clustered near the long roofs of some midland homestead, he saw the full-uddered cows driven from their pasture to the early milking. Perhaps it was the shepherd, head-servant of the farm, who drove them, his sheep-dog following with a heedless unofficial air as of a beadle in undress. The shepherd with a slow and slouching walk, timed by the walk of grazing
30 beasts, moved aside, as if unwillingly, throwing out a monosyllabic hint to his cattle ; his glance, accustomed to rest on things very near the earth, seemed to lift itself with difficulty to the coachman. Mail or stage coach for him

belonged to that mysterious distant system of things called "Gover'ment," which, whatever it might be, was no business of his, any more than the most out-lying nebula or the coal-sacks of the southern hemisphere: his solar system was the parish; the master's temper and the casualties of lambing-time were his region of storms. He cut his bread and bacon with his pocket-knife, and felt no bitterness except in the matter of pauper labourers and the bad-luck that sent contrarious seasons and the sheep-rot. He and his cows were soon left behind, and the homestead too, 10 with its pond overhung by elder-trees, its untidy kitchen-garden and cone-shaped yew-tree arbour. But everywhere the bushy hedgerows wasted the land with their straggling beauty, shrouded the grassy borders of the pastures with catkin'd hazels, and tossed their long blackberry branches on the corn-fields. Perhaps they were white with May, or starred with pale pink dogroses; perhaps the urchins were already nutting amongst them, or gathering the plenteous crabs. It was worth the journey only to see those hedgerows, the liberal homes of unmarketable beauty— 20 of the purple-blossomed ruby-berried nightshade, of the wild convolvulus climbing and spreading in tendrilled strength till it made a great curtain of pale-green hearts and white trumpets, of the many-tubed honeysuckle which, in its most delicate fragrance, hid a charm more subtle and penetrating than beauty. Even if it were winter the hedgerows showed their coral, the scarlet haws, the deep-crimson hips, with lingering brown leaves to make a resting-place for the jewels of the hoar-frost. Such hedgerows were often as tall as the labourers' cottages dotted along 30 the lanes, or clustered into a small hamlet, their little dingy windows telling, like thick-film'd eyes, of nothing but the darkness within. The passenger on the coach-

box, bowled along above such a hamlet, saw chiefly the roofs of it: probably it turned its back on the road, and seemed to lie away from everything but its own patch of earth and sky, away from the parish church by long fields and green lanes, away from all intercourse except that of tramps. If its face could be seen, it was most likely dirty; but the dirt was Protestant dirt, and the big, bold, gin-breathing tramps were Protestant tramps. There was no sign of superstition near, no crucifix or image to indicate
10 a misguided reverence: the inhabitants were probably so free from superstition that they were in much less awe of the parson than of the overseer. Yet they were saved from the excesses of Protestantism by not knowing how to read, and by the absence of handlooms and mines to be the pioneers of Dissent: they were kept safely in the *via media* of indifference, and could have registered themselves in the census by a big black mark as members of the Church of England.

But there were trim cheerful villages too, with a neat or
20 handsome parsonage and grey church set in the midst; there was the pleasant tinkle of the blacksmith's anvil, the patient cart-horses waiting at his door; the basket-maker peeling his willow wands in the sunshine; the wheelwright putting the last touch to a blue cart with red wheels; here and there a cottage with bright transparent windows showing pots full of blooming balsams or geraniums, and little gardens in front all double daisies or dark wallflowers; at the well, clean and comely women carrying yoked buckets, and towards the free school small Britons dawdling on, and
30 handling their marbles in the pockets of unpatched corduroys adorned with brass buttons. The land around was rich and marly, great corn-stacks stood in the rick-yards—
for the rick-burners had not found their way hither; the

homesteads were those of rich farmers who paid no rent, or had the rare advantage of a lease, and could afford to keep their corn till prices had risen. The coach would be sure to overtake some of them on their way to their out-lying fields or to the market-town, sitting heavily on their well-groomed horses, or weighing down one side of an olive-green gig. They probably thought of the coach with some contempt, as an accommodation for people who had not their own gigs, or who, wanting to travel to London and such distant places, belonged to the trading and less solid part of the nation. The passenger on the box could see that this was the district of protuberant optimists, sure that old England was the best of all possible countries, and that if there were any facts which had not fallen under their own observation, they were facts not worth observing: the district of clean little market-towns without manufactures, of fat livings, an aristocratic clergy, and low poor-rates. But as the day wore on the scene would change: the land would begin to be blackened with coal-pits, the rattle of handlooms to be heard in hamlets and villages. Here were powerful men walking queerly with knees bent outward from squatting in the mine, going home to throw themselves down in their blackened flannel and sleep through the daylight, then rise and spend much of their high wages at the ale-house with their fellows of the Benefit Club; here the pale eager faces of handloom-weavers, men and women, haggard from sitting up late at night to finish the week's work, hardly begun till the Wednesday. Everywhere the cottages and the small children were dirty, for the languid mothers gave their strength to the loom; pious Dissenting women, perhaps, who took life patiently, and thought that salvation depended chiefly on predestination, and not at all on cleanliness. The gables of Dissent-

ing chapels now made a visible sign of religion, and of a meeting-place to counterbalance the ale-house, even in the hamlets ; but if a couple of old termagants were seen tearing each other's caps, it was a safe conclusion that, if they had not received the sacraments of the Church, they had not at least given in to schismatic rites, and were free from the errors of Voluntarism. The breath of the manufacturing town, which made a cloudy day and a red gloom by night on the horizon, diffused itself over all the surrounding
10 country, filling the air with eager unrest. Here was a population not convinced that old England was as good as possible ; here were multitudinous men and women aware that their religion was not exactly the religion of their rulers, who might therefore be better than they were, and who, if better, might alter many things which now made the world perhaps more painful than it need be, and certainly more sinful. Yet there were the grey steeples too, and the churchyards, with their grassy mounds and venerable headstones, sleeping in the sunlight ; there were broad fields
20 and homesteads, and fine old woods covering a rising ground, or stretching far by the roadside, allowing only peeps at the park and mansion which they shut in from the working-day world. In these midland districts the traveller passed rapidly from one phase of English life to another : after looking down on a village dingy with coal-dust, noisy with the shaking of looms, he might skirt a parish all of fields, high hedges, and deep-rutted lanes ; after the coach had rattled over the pavement of a manufacturing town, the scene of riots and trades-union meetings, it would take
30 him in another ten minutes into a rural region, where the neighbourhood of the town was only felt in the advantages of a near market for corn, cheese, and hay, and where men with a considerable banking account were accustomed to

say that "they never meddled with politics themselves." The busy scenes of the shuttle and the wheel, of the roaring furnace, of the shaft and the pulley, seemed to make but crowded nests in the midst of the large-spaced, slow-moving life of homesteads and far-away cottages and oak-sheltered parks.—*Felix Holt, the Radical*, 1866.

b.

Certainly, that elder England with its frankly saleable boroughs, so cheap compared with the seats obtained under the reformed method, and its boroughs kindly presented by noblemen desirous to encourage gratitude; its 10 prisons, with a miscellaneous company of felons and maniacs and without any supply of water; its bloated, idle charities; its non-resident, jovial clergy; its militia-ballooting; and above all, its blank ignorance of what we, its posterity, should be thinking of it,—has great differences from the England of to-day. Yet we discern a strong family likeness. Is there any country which shows at once as much stability and as much susceptibility to change as ours? Our national life is like that scenery which I early learned to love, not subject to great con- 20 vulsions, but easily showing more or less delicate (sometimes melancholy) effects from minor changes. Hence our midland plains have never lost their familiar expression and conservative spirit for me; yet at every other mile, since I first looked on them, some sign of world-wide change, some new direction of human labour, has wrought itself into what one may call the speech of the landscape—in contrast with those grander and vaster regions of the earth which keep an indifferent aspect in the presence of men's toil and devices. What does it 30 signify that a lilliputian train passes over a viaduct amidst

the abysses of the Apennines, or that a caravan laden with a nation's offerings creeps across the unresting sameness of the desert, or that a petty cloud of steam sweeps for an instant over the face of an Egyptian colossus immovably submitting to its slow burial beneath the sand? But our woodlands and pastures, our hedge-parted corn-fields and meadows, our bits of high common where we used to plant the windmills, our quiet little rivers here and there fit to turn a mill-wheel, our villages along the old coach-
 10 roads, are all easily alterable lineaments that seem to make the face of our Motherland sympathetic with the laborious lives of her children. She does not take their ploughs and waggons contemptuously, but rather makes every hovel and every sheepfold, every railed bridge or fallen tree-trunk, an agreeably noticeable incident; not a mere speck in the midst of unmeasured vastness, but a piece of our social history in pictorial writing.

Our rural tracts—where no Babel-chimney scales the heavens—are without mighty objects to fill the soul with
 20 the sense of an outer world unconquerably aloof from our efforts. The wastes are playgrounds (and let us try to keep them such for the children's children who will inherit no other sort of demesne); the grasses and reeds nod to each other over the river, but we have cut a canal close by; the very heights laugh with corn in August or lift the plough-team against the sky in September. Then comes a crowd of burly navvies with pickaxes and barrows, and while hardly a wrinkle is made in the fading mother's face or a new curve of health in the blooming
 30 girl's, the hills are cut through or the breaches between them spanned, we choose our level and the white steam-pennon flies along it.

But because our land shows this readiness to be changed,

all signs of permanence upon it raise a tender attachment instead of awe: some of us, at least, love the scanty relics of our forests, and are thankful if a bush is left of the old hedgerow. A crumbling bit of wall where the delicate ivy-leaved toad-flax hangs its light branches, or a bit of grey thatch with patches of dark moss on its shoulder and a troop of grass-stems on its ridge, is a thing to visit. And then the tiled roof of cottage and homestead, of the long cow-shed where generations of the milky mothers have stood patiently, of the broad-shouldered barns where the old-fashioned flail once made resonant music, while the watch-dog barked at the timidly venturesome fowls making pecking raids on the outlying grain—the roofs that have looked out from among the elms and walnut-trees, or beside the yearly group of hay and corn stacks, or below the square stone steeple, gathering their grey or ochre-tinted lichens and their olive-green mosses under all ministries,—let us praise the sober harmonies they give to our landscape, helping to unite us pleasantly with the elder generations who tilled the soil for us before we were born, and paid heavier and heavier taxes, with much grumbling, but without that deepest root of corruption—the self-indulgent despair which cuts down and consumes and never plants. — *The Impressions of Theophrastus Such*, 1879. “Looking Backward.”

II. BOYS AND GIRLS.

a. BROTHER AND SISTER.

I.

I CANNOT choose but think upon the time
 When our two lives grew like two buds that kiss
 At lightest thrill from the bee's swinging chime,
 Because the one so near the other is.

He was the elder and a little man
 Of forty inches, bound to show no dread,
 And I the girl that puppy-like now ran,
 Now lagged behind my brother's larger tread.

10 I held him wise, and when he talked to me
 Of snakes and birds, and which God loved the best,
 I thought his knowledge marked the boundary
 Where men grew blind, though angels knew the rest.

If he said "Hush!" I tried to hold my breath,
 Wherever he said "Come!" I stepped in faith.

II.

18 Long years have left their writing on my brow,
 But yet the freshness and the dew-fed beam
 Of those young mornings are about me now,
 When we two wandered toward the far-off stream

With rod and line. Our basket held a store
Baked for us only, and I thought with joy
That I should have my share, though he had more,
Because he was the elder and a boy.

The firmaments of daisies since to me
Have had those mornings in their opening eyes,
The bunchèd cowslip's pale transparency
Carries that sunshine of sweet memories,

And wild-rose branches take their finest scent
From those blest hours of infantine content.

10

III.

Our mother bade us keep the trodden ways,
Stroked down my tippet, set my brother's frill,
Then with the benediction of her gaze
Clung to us lessening, and pursued us still

Across the homestead to the rookery elms,
Whose tall old trunks had each a grassy mound,
So rich for us, we counted them as realms
With varied products : here were earth-nuts found,

And here the Lady-fingers in deep shade ;
Here sloping toward the Moat the rushes grew,
The large to split for pith, the small to braid ;
While over all the dark rooks cawing flew,

20

And made a happy strange solemnity,
A deep-toned chant from life unknown to me.

IV.

Our meadow-path had memorable spots :
 One where it bridged a tiny rivulet,
 Deep hid by tangled blue Forget-me-nots ;
 And all along the waving grasses met

My little palm, or nodded to my cheek,
 When flowers with upturned faces gazing drew
 My wonder downward, seeming all to speak
 With eyes of souls that dumbly heard and knew.

10 Then came the copse, where wild things rushed unseen,
 And black-scathed grass betrayed the past abode
 Of mystic gypsies, who still lurked between
 Me and each hidden distance of the road.

A gypsy once had startled me at play,
 Blotting with her dark smile my sunny day.

.

VI.

Our brown canal was endless to my thought ;
 And on its banks I sat in dreamy peace,
 Unknowing how the good I loved was wrought,
 Untroubled by the fear that it would cease.

20 Slowly the barges floated into view
 Rounding a grassy hill to me sublime
 With some Unknown beyond it, whither flew
 The parting cuckoo toward a fresh spring time.

The wide-arched bridge, the scented elder-flowers,
 The wondrous watery rings that died too soon,
 The echoes of the quarry, the still hours
 With white robe sweeping on the shadeless noon,

Were but my growing self, are part of me,
 My present Past, my root of piety.

VII.

Those long days measured by my little feet
 Had chronicles which yield me many a text ;
 Where irony still finds an image meet
 Of full-grown judgments in this world perplexed. 10

One day my brother left me in high charge,
 To mind the rod, while he went seeking bait,
 And bade me, when I saw a nearing barge,
 Snatch out the line, lest he should come too late.

Proud of the task, I watched with all my might
 For one whole minute, till my eyes grew wide,
 Till sky and earth took on a strange new light
 And seemed a dream-world floating on some tide—

A fair pavilioned boat for me alone
 Bearing me onward through the vast unknown. 20

VIII.

But sudden came the barge's pitch-black prow,
 Nearer and angrier came my brother's cry,
 And all my soul was quivering fear, when lo!
 Upon the imperilled line, suspended high,

A silver perch ! My guilt that won the prey,
 Now turned to merit, had a guerdon rich
 Of hugs and praises, and made merry play,
 Until my triumph reached its highest pitch

When all at home were told the wondrous feat,
 And how the little sister had fished well.
 In secret, though my fortune tasted sweet,
 I wondered why this happiness befell.

10 "The little lass had luck," the gardener said :
 And so I learned, luck was with glory wed.

.

X.

His sorrow was my sorrow, and his joy
 Sent little leaps and laughs through all my frame ;
 My doll seemed lifeless and no girlish toy
 Had any reason when my brother came.

I knelt with him at marbles, marked his fling
 Cut the ringed stem and make the apple drop,
 Or watched him winding close the spiral string
 That looped the orbits of the humming top.

.

XI.

20 School parted us ; we never found again
 That childish world where our two spirits mingled
 Like scents from varying roses that remain
 One sweetness, nor can evermore be singled.

Yet the twin habit of that early time
 Lingered for long about the heart and tongue :
 We had been natives of one happy clime,
 And its dear accent to our utterance clung.

Till the dire years whose awful name is Change
 Had grasped our souls still yearning in divorce,
 And pitiless shaped them in two forms that range
 Two elements which sever their life's course.

But were another childhood-world my share,
 I would be born a little sister there.

10

—*The Legend of Jubal, and Other Poems*, 1874.

b. TOM AND MAGGIE.

Tom is expected.

It was a heavy disappointment to Maggie that she was not allowed to go with her father in the gig when he went to fetch Tom home from the academy; but the morning was too wet, Mrs Tulliver said, for a little girl to go out in her best bonnet. Maggie took the opposite view very strongly, and it was a direct consequence of this difference of opinion that when her mother was in the act of brushing out the reluctant black crop, Maggie suddenly rushed from under her hands and dipped her head in a basin of water standing near—in the vindictive determination that there should be no more chance of curls that day. 20

“Maggie, Maggie,” exclaimed Mrs Tulliver, sitting stout and helpless with the brushes on her lap, “what is to become of you if you’re so naughty? I’ll tell your aunt Glegg and your aunt Pullet when they come next week, and they’ll never love you any more. Oh dear, oh dear!

look at your clean pinafore, wet from top to bottom. Folks 'ull think it's a judgment on me as I've got such a child—they'll think I've done summat wicked."

Before this remonstrance was finished, Maggie was already out of hearing, making her way towards the great attic that ran under the old high-pitched roof, shaking the water from her black locks as she ran, like a Skye terrier escaped from his bath. This attic was Maggie's favourite retreat on a wet day, when the weather was not
10 too cold; here she fretted out all her ill-humours, and talked aloud to the worm-eaten floors and the worm-eaten shelves, and the dark rafters festooned with cobwebs; and here she kept a Fetish which she punished for all her misfortunes. This was the trunk of a large wooden doll, which once stared with the roundest of eyes above the reddest of cheeks; but was now entirely defaced by a long career of vicarious suffering. Three nails driven into the head commemorated as many crises in Maggie's nine
20 years of earthly struggle; that luxury of vengeance having been suggested to her by the picture of Jael destroying Sisera in the old Bible. The last nail had been driven in with a fiercer stroke than usual, for the Fetish on that occasion represented aunt Glegg. But immediately afterwards Maggie had reflected that if she drove many nails in, she would not be so well able to fancy that the head was hurt when she knocked it against the wall, nor to comfort it, and make believe to poultice it, when her fury was abated; for even aunt Glegg would be pitiable when she had been hurt very much, and thoroughly humiliated,
30 so as to beg her niece's pardon. Since then she had driven no more nails in, but had soothed herself by alternately grinding and beating the wooden head against the rough brick of the great chimneys that made two

square pillars supporting the roof. That was what she did this morning on reaching the attic, sobbing all the while with a passion that expelled every other form of consciousness—even the memory of the grievance that had caused it. As at last the sobs were getting quieter, and the grinding less fierce, a sudden beam of sunshine, falling through the wire lattice across the worm-eaten shelves, made her throw away the Fetish and run to the window. The sun was really breaking out; the sound of the mill seemed cheerful again; the granary doors were open; and there was Yap, the queer white-and-brown terrier, with one ear turned back, trotting about and sniffing vaguely, as if he were in search of a companion. It was irresistible. Maggie tossed her hair back and ran down-stairs, seized her bonnet without putting it on, peeped, and then dashed along the passage lest she should encounter her mother, and was quickly out in the yard, whirling round like a Pythoness, and singing as she whirled, "Yap, Yap, Tom's coming home!" while Yap danced and barked round her, as much as to say, if there was any noise wanted he was the dog for it. 10 20

"Hegh, hegh, miss, you'll make yourself giddy, an' tumble down i' the dirt," said Luke, the head miller, a tall broad-shouldered man of forty, black-eyed and black-haired, subdued by a general mealiness, like an auricula.

Maggie paused in her whirling and said, staggering a little, "Oh no, it doesn't make me giddy, Luke; may I go into the mill with you?"

Maggie loved to linger in the great spaces of the mill, and often came out with her black hair powdered to a soft whiteness that made her dark eyes flash out with new fire. The resolute din, the unresting motion of the great stones, giving her a dim delicious awe as at the presence 30

- of an uncontrollable force—the meal for ever pouring, pouring—the fine white powder softening all surfaces, and making the very spider-nets look like a faery lace-work—the sweet pure scent of the meal,—all helped to make Maggie feel that the mill was a little world apart from her outside everyday life. The spiders were especially a subject of speculation with her. She wondered if they had any relatives outside the mill, for in that case there must be a painful difficulty in their family intercourse—
- 10 a fat and floury spider, accustomed to take his fly well dusted with meal, must suffer a little at a cousin's table where the fly was *au naturel*, and the lady-spiders must be mutually shocked at each other's appearance. But the part of the mill she liked best was the topmost story—the corn-hutch, where there were the great heaps of grain, which she could sit on and slide down continually. She was in the habit of taking this recreation as she conversed with Luke, to whom she was very communicative, wishing him to think well of her understanding, as her father did.
- 20 Perhaps she felt it necessary to recover her position with him on the present occasion, for, as she sat sliding on the heap of grain near which he was busying himself, she said, at that shrill pitch which was requisite in mill-society—
- “I think you never read any book but the Bible—did you, Luke?”
- “Nay, miss—an' not much o' that,” said Luke, with great frankness. “I'm no reader, I aren't.”
- “But if I lent you one of my books, Luke? I've not
- 30 got any *very* pretty books that would be easy for you to read; but there's 'Pug's Tour of Europe'—that would tell you all about the different sorts of people in the world, and if you didn't understand the reading, the pic-

tures would help you—they show the looks and ways of the people, and what they do. There are the Dutchmen, very fat, and smoking, you know—and one sitting on a barrel."

"Nay, miss, I'n no opinion o' Dutchmen. There ben't much good i' knowin' about *them*."

"But they're our fellow-creatures, Luke—we ought to know about our fellow-creatures."

"Not much o' fellow-creatures, I think, miss; all I know—my old master, as war a 'knowin' man, used to say, says 10 he, 'If e'er I sow my wheat wi'out brinin', I'm a Dutchman,' says he; an' that war as much as to say as a Dutchman war a fool, or next door. Nay, nay, I aren't goin' to bother mysen about Dutchmen. There's fools enoo—an' rogues enoo—wi'out lookin' i' books for 'em."

"Oh, well," said Maggie, rather foiled by Luke's unexpectedly decided views about Dutchmen, "perhaps you would like 'Animated Nature' better—that's not Dutchmen, you know, but elephants, and kangaroos, and the civet cat, and the sun-fish, and a bird sitting on its tail— 20 I forget its name. There are countries full of those creatures, instead of horses and cows, you know. Shouldn't you like to know about them, Luke?"

"Nay, miss, I'n got to keep count o' the flour an' corn—I can't do wi' knowin' so many things besides my work. That's what brings folks to the gallows—knowin' every-thing but what they'n got to get their bread by. An' they're mostly lies, I think, what's printed i' the books: them printed sheets are, anyhow, as the men cry i' the streets."

30

"Why, you're like my brother Tom, Luke," said Maggie, wishing to turn the conversation agreeably; "Tom's not fond of reading. I love Tom so dearly, Luke—better

than anybody else in the world. When he grows up, I shall keep his house, and we shall always live together. I can tell him everything he doesn't know. But I think Tom's clever, for all he doesn't like books: he makes beautiful whipcord and rabbit-pens."

"Ah," said Luke, "but he'll be fine an' vexed, as the rabbits are all dead."

"Dead!" screamed Maggie, jumping up from her sliding seat on the corn. "Oh dear, Luke! What! the lop-eared
10 one, and the spotted doe that Tom spent all his money to buy?"

"As dead as moles," said Luke, fetching his comparison from the unmistakable corpses nailed to the stable-wall.

"Oh dear, Luke," said Maggie, in a piteous tone, while the big tears rolled down her cheek; "Tom told me to take care of 'em, and I forgot. What *shall* I do?"

"Well, you see, miss, they were in that far tool-house, an' it was nobody's business to see to 'em. I reckon Master Tom told Harry to feed 'em, but there's
20 no countin' on Harry—he's an offal creatur as iver come about the premises, he is. He remembers nothing but his own inside—an' I wish it 'ud gripe him."

"Oh, Luke, Tom told me to be sure and remember the rabbits every day; but how could I, when they didn't come into my head, you know? Oh, he will be so angry with me, I know he will, and so sorry about his rabbits—and so am I sorry. Oh, what *shall* I do?"

"Don't you fret, miss," said Luke, soothingly, "they're nash things, them lop-eared rabbits—they'd happen ha'
30 died, if they'd been fed. Things out o' natur niver thrive: God A'mighty doesn't like 'em. He made the rabbits' ears to lie back, an' it's nothin' but contrairiness to make 'em hing down like a mastiff dog's. Master Tom 'ull

know better nor buy such things another time. Don't you fret, miss. Will you come along home wi' me, and see my wife? I'm a-goin' this minute."

The invitation offered an agreeable distraction to Maggie's grief, and her tears gradually subsided as she trotted along by Luke's side to his pleasant cottage, which stood with its apple and pear trees, and with the added dignity of a lean-to pig-sty, at the other end of the Mill fields. Mrs. Moggs, Luke's wife, was a decidedly agreeable acquaintance. She exhibited her hospitality in bread and treacle, and possessed various works of art. Maggie actually forgot that she had any special cause of sadness this morning, as she stood on a chair to look at a remarkable series of pictures representing the Prodigal Son in the costume of Sir Charles Grandison, except that, as might have been expected from his defective moral character, he had not, like that accomplished hero, the taste and strength of mind to dispense with a wig. But the indefinable weight the dead rabbits had left on her mind caused her to feel more than usual pity for the career of this weak young man, particularly when she looked at the picture where he leaned against a tree with a flaccid appearance, his knee-breeches unbuttoned and his wig awry, while the swine, apparently of some foreign breed, seemed to insult him by their good spirits over their feast of husks. 10 20

"I'm very glad his father took him back again—aren't you, Luke?" she said. "For he was very sorry, you know, and wouldn't do wrong again."

"Eh, miss," said Luke, "he'd be no great shakes, I doubt, let's feyther do what he would for him." 30

That was a painful thought to Maggie, and she wished much that the subsequent history of the young man had not been left a blank.—*The Mill on the Floss*, 1860.

Tom comes Home.

Tom was to arrive early in the afternoon, and there was another fluttering heart besides Maggie's when it was late enough for the sound of the gig-wheels to be expected ; for if Mrs Tulliver had a strong feeling, it was fondness for her boy. At last the sound came—that quick light bowling of the gig-wheels—and in spite of the wind, which was blowing the clouds about, and was not likely to respect Mrs Tulliver's curls and cap-strings, she came outside the door, and even held her hand on Maggie's offending head,
10 forgetting all the griefs of the morning.

“There he is, my sweet lad ! But, Lord ha' mercy ! he's got never a collar on ; it's been lost on the road, I'll be bound, and spoilt the set.”

Mrs Tulliver stood with her arms open ; Maggie jumped first on one leg and then on the other ; while Tom descended from the gig, and said, with masculine reticence as to the tender emotions, “Hallo ! Yap—what ! are you there ?”

Nevertheless he submitted to be kissed willingly enough,
20 though Maggie hung on his neck in rather a strangling fashion, while his blue-grey eyes wandered towards the croft and the lambs and the river, where he promised himself that he would begin to fish the first thing to-morrow morning. He was one of those lads that grow everywhere in England, and, at twelve or thirteen years of age, look as much alike as goslings ;—a lad with light-brown hair, cheeks of cream and roses, full lips, indeterminate nose and eyebrows—a physiognomy in which it seems impossible to discern anything but the generic character of boyhood ;
30 as different as possible from poor Maggie's phiz, which, Nature seemed to have moulded and coloured with the

most decided intention. But that same Nature has the deep cunning which hides itself under the appearance of openness, so that simple people think they can see through her quite well, and all the while she is secretly preparing a refutation of their confident prophecies. Under these average boyish physiognomies that she seems to turn off by the gross, she conceals some of her most rigid, inflexible purposes, some of her most unmodifiable characters; and the dark-eyed, demonstrative, rebellious girl may after all turn out to be a passive being compared with this pink-and-white bit of masculinity with the indeterminate features. 10

"Maggie," said Tom, confidentially, taking her into a corner, as soon as his mother was gone out to examine his box, and the warm parlour had taken off the chill he had felt from the long drive, "you don't know what I've got in *my* pockets," nodding his head up and down as a means of rousing her sense of mystery.

"No," said Maggie. "How stodgy they look, Tom! Is it marls [marbles] or cobnuts?" Maggie's heart sank a little, because Tom always said it was "no good" playing 20 with *her* at those games—she played so badly.

"Marls! no; I've swopped all my marls with the little fellows, and cobnuts are no fun, you silly, only when the nuts are green. But see here!" He drew something half out of his right-hand pocket.

"What is it?" said Maggie, in a whisper. "I can see nothing but a bit of yellow."

"Why, it's . . . a . . . new . . . guess, Maggie!"

"Oh, I *can't* guess, Tom," said Maggie, impatiently.

"Don't be a spitfire, else I won't tell you," said Tom, 30 thrusting his hand back into his pocket, and looking determined.

"No, Tom," said Maggie, imploringly, laying hold of

the arm that was held stiffly in the pocket. "I'm not cross, Tom; it was only because I can't bear guessing. *Please* be good to me."

Tom's arm slowly relaxed, and he said, "Well, then it's a new fish-line—two new uns—one for you, Maggie; all to yourself. I wouldn't go halves in the toffee and ginger-bread on purpose to save the money; and Gibson and Spouncer fought with me because I wouldn't. And here's hooks; see here! . . . I say, *won't* we go and fish
10 to-morrow down by the Round Pool? And you shall catch your own fish, Maggie, and put the worms on, and everything—won't it be fun?"

Maggie's answer was to throw her arms round Tom's neck and hug him, and hold her cheek against his without speaking, while he slowly unwound some of the line, saying, after a pause—

"Wasn't I a good brother, now, to buy you a line all to yourself? You know, I needn't have bought it, if I hadn't liked."

20 "Yes, very, very good . . . I *do* love you, Tom."

Tom had put the line back in his pocket, and was looking at the hooks one by one, before he spoke again.

"And the fellows fought me, because I wouldn't give in about the toffee."

"Oh dear! I wish they wouldn't fight at your school, Tom. Didn't it hurt you?"

"Hurt me? no," said Tom, putting up the hooks again, taking out a large pocket-knife, and slowly opening the largest blade, which he looked at meditatively as he rubbed
30 his finger along it. Then he added—

"I gave Spouncer a black eye, I know—that's what he got by wanting to leather *me*; I wasn't going to go halves, because anybody leathered me."

"Oh, how brave you are, Tom! I think you're like Samson. If there came a lion roaring at me, I think you'd fight him,—wouldn't you, Tom?"

"How can a lion come roaring at you, you silly thing? There's no lions, only in the shows."

"No; but if we were in the lion countries—I mean in Africa, where it's very hot—the lions eat people there. I can show it you in the book where I read it."

"Well, I should get a gun and shoot him."

"But if you hadn't got a gun—we might have gone out, 10 you know, not thinking—just as we go fishing; and then a great lion might run towards us roaring, and we couldn't get away from him. What should you do, Tom?"

Tom paused, and at last turned away contemptuously, saying, "But the lion *isn't* coming. What's the use of talking?"

"But I like to fancy how it would be," said Maggie, following him. "Just think what you would do, Tom."

"Oh, don't bother, Maggie! you're such a silly—I shall go and see my rabbits." 20

Maggie's heart began to flutter with fear. She dared not tell the sad truth at once, but she walked after Tom in trembling silence as he went out, thinking how she could tell him the news so as to soften at once his sorrow and his anger; for Maggie dreaded Tom's anger of all things—it was quite a different anger from her own.

"Tom," she said, timidly, when they were out of doors, "how much money did you give for your rabbits?"

"Two half-crowns and a sixpence," said Tom, promptly.

"I think I've got a great deal more than that in my 30 steel purse upstairs. I'll ask mother to give it you."

"What for?" said Tom. "I don't want *your* money, you silly thing. I've got a great deal more money than

you, because I'm a boy. I always have half-sovereigns and sovereigns for my Christmas boxes, because I shall be a man, and you only have five-shilling pieces, because you're only a girl."

"Well, but, Tom—if mother would let me give you two half-crowns and a sixpence out of my purse to put into your pocket and spend, you know; and buy some more rabbits with it?"

"More rabbits? I don't want any more."

10 "Oh, but, Tom, they're all dead."

Tom stopped immediately in his walk and turned round towards Maggie. "You forgot to feed 'em, then, and Harry forgot?" he said, his colour heightening for a moment, but soon subsiding. "I'll pitch into Harry—I'll have him turned away. And I don't love you, Maggie. You shan't go fishing with me to-morrow. I told you to go and see the rabbits every day." He walked on again.

"Yes, but I forgot—and I couldn't help it, indeed, Tom. I'm so very sorry," said Maggie, while the tears rushed
20 fast.

"You're a naughty girl," said Tom, severely, "and I'm sorry I bought you the fish-line. I don't love you."

"Oh, Tom, it's very cruel," sobbed Maggie. "I'd forgive you, if *you* forgot anything—I wouldn't mind what you did—I'd forgive you and love you."

"Yes, you're a silly—but I never *do* forget things—I don't."

"Oh, please forgive me, Tom; my heart will break," said Maggie, shaking with sobs, clinging to Tom's arm, and
30 laying her wet cheek on his shoulder.

Tom shook her off, and stopped again, saying in a peremptory tone, "Now, Maggie, you just listen. Aren't I a good brother to you?"

"Ye-ye-es," sobbed Maggie, her chin rising and falling convulsedly. .

"Didn't I think about your fish-line all this quarter, and mean to buy it, and saved my money o' purpose, and wouldn't go halves in the toffee, and Spouncer fought me because I wouldn't?"

"Ye-ye-es . . . and I . . . lo-lo-love you so, Tom."

"But you're a naughty girl. Last holidays you licked the paint off my lozenge box, and the holidays before that you let the boat drag my fish-line down when I'd set you to watch it, and you pushed your head through my kite, all for nothing." 10

"But I didn't mean," said Maggie; "I couldn't help it."

"Yes, you could," said Tom, "if you'd minded what you were doing. And you're a naughty girl, and you shan't go fishing with me to-morrow."

With this terrible conclusion, Tom ran away from Maggie towards the mill, meaning to greet Luke there, and complain to him of Harry.

Maggie stood motionless, except from her sobs, for a 20 minute or two; then she turned round and ran into the house, and up to her attic, where she sat on the floor, and laid her head against the worm-eaten shelf, with a crushing sense of misery. Tom was come home, and she had thought how happy she should be—and now he was cruel to her. What use was anything, if Tom didn't love her? Oh, he was very cruel! Hadn't she wanted to give him the money, and said how very sorry she was? She knew she was naughty to her mother, but she had never been naughty to Tom—had never *meant* to be naughty 30 to him.

• "Oh, he is cruel!" Maggie sobbed aloud, finding a wretched pleasure in the hollow resonance that came

through the long empty space of the attic. She never thought of beating or grinding her Fetish; she was too miserable to be angry.

These bitter sorrows of childhood! when sorrow is all new and strange, when hope has not yet got wings to fly beyond the days and weeks, and the space from summer to summer seems measureless.

Maggie soon thought she had been hours in the attic, and it must be tea-time, and they were all having their
10 tea, and not thinking of her. "Well, then, she would stay up there and starve herself—hide herself behind the tub, and stay there all night; and then they would all be frightened, and Tom would be sorry. Thus Maggie thought in the pride of her heart, as she crept behind the tub; but presently she began to cry again at the idea that they didn't mind her being there. If she went down again to Tom now—would he forgive her?—perhaps her father would be there, and he would take her part. But, then, she wanted Tom to forgive her because he
20 loved her, not because his father told him. No, she would never go down if Tom didn't come to fetch her. This resolution lasted in great intensity for five dark minutes behind the tub; but then the need of being loved, the strongest need in poor Maggie's nature, began to wrestle with her pride, and soon threw it. She crept from behind her tub into the twilight of the long attic, but just then she heard a quick footstep on the stairs.

Tom had been too much interested in his talk with Luke, in going the round of the premises, walking in and
30 out where he pleased, and whittling sticks without any particular reason, except that he didn't whittle sticks at school, to think of Maggie and the effect his anger had produced on her. He meant to punish her, and that

business having been performed, he occupied himself with other matters, like a practical person. But when he had been called in to tea, his father said, "Why, where's the little wench?" and Mrs Tulliver, almost at the same moment, said, "Where's your little sister?"—both of them having supposed that Maggie and Tom had been together all the afternoon.

"I don't know," said Tom. He didn't want to "tell" of Maggie, though he was angry with her; for Tom Tulliver was a lad of honour.

10

"What! hasn't she been playing with you all this while?" said the father. "She'd been thinking o' nothing but your coming home."

"I haven't seen her this two hours," says Tom, commencing on the plumcake.

"Goodness heart! she's got drowned," exclaimed Mrs Tulliver, rising from her seat and running to the window. "How could you let her do so?" she added, as became a fearful woman, accusing she didn't know whom of she didn't know what.

20

"Nay, nay, she's none drowned," said Mr Tulliver. "You've been naughty to her, I doubt, Tom?"

"I'm sure I haven't, father," said Tom, indignantly. "I think she's in the house."

"Perhaps up in that attic," said Mrs Tulliver, "a-singing and talking to herself, and forgetting all about meal-times."

"You go and fetch her down, Tom," said Mr Tulliver, rather sharply, his perspicacity or his fatherly fondness for Maggie making him suspect that the lad had been hard upon "the little un," else she would never have left his side. "And be good to her, do you hear? Else I'll let you know better."

30

Tom never disobeyed his father, for Mr Tulliver was a

peremptory man, and, as he said, would never let anybody get hold of his whip-hand ; but he went out rather sullenly, carrying his piece of plumcake, and not intending to relieve Maggie's punishment, which was no more than she deserved. Tom was only thirteen, and had no decided views in grammar and arithmetic, regarding them for the most part as open questions, but he was particularly clear and positive on one point—namely, that he would punish everybody who deserved it : why, he wouldn't have minded
 10 being punished himself, if he deserved it ; but, then, he never *did* deserve it.

It was Tom's step, then, that Maggie heard on the stairs, when her need of love had triumphed over her pride, and she was going down with her swollen eyes and dishevelled hair to beg for pity. At least her father would stroke her head and say, "Never mind, my wench." It is a wonderful subduer, this need of love—this hunger of the heart—as peremptory as that other hunger by which Nature forces us to submit to the yoke, and change the
 20 face of the world. 41345

But she knew Tom's step, and her heart began to beat violently with the sudden shock of hope. He only stood still at the top of the stairs and said, "Maggie, you're to come down." But she rushed to him and clung round his neck, sobbing, "Oh, Tom, please forgive me—I can't bear it—I will always be good—always remember things—do love me—please, dear Tom !"

We learn to restrain ourselves as we get older. We keep apart when we have quarrelled, express ourselves
 30 in well-bred phrases, and in this way preserve a dignified alienation, showing much firmness on one side, and swallowing much grief on the other. We no longer approximate in our behaviour to the mere impulsiveness of the

lower animals, but conduct ourselves in every respect like members of a highly civilised society. Maggie and Tom were still very much like young animals, and so she could rub her cheek against his, and kiss his ear in a random, sobbing way; and there were tender fibres in the lad that had been used to answer to Maggie's fondling; so that he behaved with a weakness quite inconsistent with his resolution to punish her as much as she deserved: he actually began to kiss her in return, and say—

“Don't cry, then, Magsie—here, eat a bit o' cake.” 10

Maggie's sobs began to subside, and she put out her mouth for the cake and bit a piece: and then Tom bit a piece, just for company, and they ate together and rubbed each other's cheeks and brows and noses together, while they ate, with a humiliating resemblance to two friendly ponies.

“Come along, Magsie, and have tea,” said Tom at last, when there was no more cake except what was downstairs.

So ended the sorrows of this day, and the next morning Maggie was trotting with her own fishing-rod in one hand 20 and a handle of the basket in the other, stepping always, by a peculiar gift, in the muddiest places, and looking darkly radiant from under her beaver-bonnet because Tom was good to her. She had told Tom, however, that she should like him to put the worms on the hook for her, although she accepted his word when he assured her that worms couldn't feel (it was Tom's private opinion that it didn't much matter if they did). He knew all about worms, and fish, and those things; and what birds were mischievous, and how padlocks opened, and which way 30 the handles of the gates were to be lifted. Maggie thought this sort of knowledge was very wonderful—much more difficult than remembering what was in the

books ; and she was rather in awe of Tom's superiority, for he was the only person who called her knowledge "stuff," and did not feel surprised at her cleverness. Tom, indeed, was of opinion that Maggie was a silly little thing ; all girls were silly—they couldn't throw a stone so as to hit anything, couldn't do anything with a pocket-knife, and were frightened at frogs. Still he was very fond of his sister, and meant always to take care of her, make her his housekeeper, and punish her
10 when she did wrong.

They were on their way to the Round Pool—that wonderful pool, which the floods had made a long while ago : no one knew how deep it was ; and it was mysterious, too, that it should be almost a perfect round, framed in with willows and tall reeds, so that the water was only to be seen when you got close to the brink. The sight of the old favourite spot always heightened Tom's good-humour, and he spoke to Maggie in the most amicable
20 whispers, as he opened the precious basket and prepared their tackle. He threw her line for her, and put the rod into her hand. Maggie thought it probable that the small fish would come to her hook, and the large ones to Tom's. But she had forgotten all about the fish, and was looking dreamily at the glassy water, when Tom said, in a loud whisper, "Look, look, Maggie !" and came running to prevent her from snatching her line away.

Maggie was frightened lest she had been doing something wrong, as usual, but presently Tom drew out her line and brought a large tench bouncing on the grass.

30 Tom was excited.

"Oh, Magsie ! you little duck ! Empty the basket."

Maggie was not conscious of unusual merit, but it was enough that Tom called her Magsie, and was pleased with

her. There was nothing to mar her delight in the whispers and the dreamy silences, when she listened to the light dipping sounds of the rising fish, and the gentle rustling, as if the willows and the reeds and the water had their happy whisperings also. Maggie thought it would make a very nice heaven to sit by the pool in that way, and never be scolded. She never knew she had a bite till Tom told her ; but she liked fishing very much.

It was one of their happy mornings. They trotted along and sat down together, with no thought that life would ever change much for them : they would only get bigger and not go to school, and it would always be like the holidays ; they would always live together and be fond of each other. And the mill with its booming—the great chestnut-tree under which they played at houses—their own little river, the Ripple, where the banks seemed like home, and Tom was always seeing the water-rats, while Maggie gathered the purple plummy tops of the reeds, which she forgot and dropped afterwards—above all, the great Floss, along which they wandered with a sense of travel, to see the rushing spring-tide, the awful Eagre, come up like a hungry monster, or to see the Great Ash which had once wailed and groaned like a man—these things would always be just the same to them. Tom thought people were at a disadvantage who lived on any other spot of the globe ; and Maggie, when she read about Christiana passing “the river over which there is no bridge,” always saw the Floss between the green pastures by the Great Ash. 10 20

Life did change for Tom and Maggie ; and yet they were not wrong in believing that the thoughts and loves of these first years would always make part of their lives. We could never have loved the earth so well if we had had no childhood in it,—if it were not the earth where 30

the same flowers come up again every spring that we used to gather with our tiny fingers as we sat lipping to ourselves on the grass—the same hips and haws on the autumn hedgerows—the same redbreasts that we used to call “God’s birds,” because they did no harm to the precious crops. What novelty is worth that sweet monotony where everything is known, and *loved* because it is known?

The wood I walk in on this mild May day, with the
 10 young yellow-brown foliage of the oaks between me and the blue sky, the white star-flowers and the blue-eyed speedwell and the ground ivy at my feet—what grove of tropic palms, what strange ferns or splendid broad-petalled blossoms, could ever thrill such deep and delicate fibres within me as this home-scene? These familiar flowers, these well-remembered bird-notes, this sky, with its fitful brightness, these furrowed and grassy fields, each with a sort of personality given to it by the capricious
 20 hedgerows—such things as these are the mother-tongue of our imagination, the language that is laden with all the subtle inextricable associations the fleeting hours of our childhood left behind them. Our delight in the sunshine on the deep-bladed grass to-day might be no more than the faint perception of wearied souls, if it were not for the sunshine and the grass in the far-off years which still live in us, and transform our perception into love.—
Ibid.

•
The Aunts and Uncles are coming.

It was Easter week, and Mrs Tulliver’s cheese-cakes were more exquisitely light than usual: “a puff o’ wind ’ud
 30 make ’em blow about like feathers,” Kezia the housemaid, said,—feeling proud to live under a mistress, who could

make such pastry; so that no season or circumstances could have been more propitious for a family party, even if it had not been advisable to consult sister Glegg and sister Pullet about Tom's going to school.

"I'd as lief not invite sister Deane this time," said Mrs Tulliver, "for she's as jealous and having as can be, and 's allays trying to make the worst o' my poor children to their aunts and uncles."

"Yes, yes," said Mr Tulliver, "ask her to come. I never hardly get a bit o' talk with Deane now: we haven't 10 had him this six months. What's it matter what she says?—my children need be beholding to nobody."

"That's what you allays say, Mr Tulliver; but I'm sure there's nobody o' your side, neither aunt nor uncle, to leave 'em so much as a five-pound note for a leggicy. And there's sister Glegg, and sister Pullet too, saving money unknown—for they put by all their own interest and butter-money too; their husbands buy 'em everything." Mrs Tulliver was a mild woman, but even a sheep will face about a little when she has lambs. 20

"Tchuh!" said Mr Tulliver. "It takes a big loaf when there's many to breakfast. What signifies your sisters' bits o' money when they've got half-a-dozen nevvies and nieces to divide it among? And your sister Deane won't get 'em to leave all to one, I reckon, and make the country cry shame on 'em when they are dead?"

"I don't know what she won't get 'em to do," said Mrs Tulliver, "for my children are so awk'ard wi' their aunts and uncles. Maggie's ten times naughtier when they come than she is other days, and Tom doesn't like 'em, bless him 30 —though it's more nat'ral in a boy than a gell. And there's Lucy Deane 's such a good child—you may set her on a stool, and there she'll sit for an hour together, and

never offer to get off. I can't help loving the child as if she was my own; and I'm sure she's more like *my* child than sister Deane's, for she'd allays a very poor colour for one of our family, sister Deane had."

"Well, well, if you're fond o' the child, ask her father and mother to bring her with 'em. And won't you ask their aunt and uncle Moss too? and some o' *their* children?"

"Oh dear, Mr Tulliver, why, there'd be 'eight people
10 besides the children, and I must put two more leaves i' the table, besides reaching down more o' the dinner-service; and you know as well as I do as *my* sisters and *your* sister don't suit well together."

"Well, well, do as you like, Bessy," said Mr Tulliver, taking up his hat and walking out to the mill. Few wives were more submissive than Mrs Tulliver on all points unconnected with her family relations; but she had been a Miss Dodson, and the Dodsons were a very respectable family indeed—as much looked up to as any in their own
20 parish, or the next to it. The Miss Dodsons had always been thought to hold up their heads very high, and no one was surprised the two eldest had married so well—not at an early age, for that was not the practice of the Dodson family. There were particular ways of doing everything in that family: particular ways of bleaching the linen, of making the cowslip wine, curing the hams, and keeping the bottled gooseberries; so that no daughter of that house could be indifferent to the privilege of having been born a Dodson, rather than a Gibson or a Watson. Funerals were
30 always conducted with peculiar propriety in the Dodson family; the hat-bands were never of a blue shade, the gloves never split at the thumb, everybody was a mourner who ought to be, and there were always scarfs for the

bearers. When one of the family was in trouble or sickness, all the rest went to visit the unfortunate member, usually at the same time, and did not shrink from uttering the most disagreeable truths that correct family feeling dictated: if the illness or trouble was the sufferer's own fault, it was not in the practice of the Dodson family to shrink from saying so. In short, there was in this family a peculiar tradition as to what was the right thing in household management and social demeanour, and the only bitter circumstance attending this superiority was a 10
painful inability to approve the condiments or the conduct of families ungoverned by the Dodson tradition. A female Dodson, when in "strange houses," always ate dry bread with her tea, and declined any sort of preserves, having no confidence in the butter, and thinking that the preserves had probably begun to ferment from want of due sugar and boiling. There were some Dodsons less like the family than others—that was admitted; but in so far as they were "kin," they were of necessity better than those who were "no kin." And it is remarkable that while no 20
individual Dodson was satisfied with any other individual Dodson, each was satisfied not only with him or her self, but with the Dodsons collectively. The feeblest member of a family—the one who has the least character—is often the merest epitome of the family habits and traditions; and Mrs Tulliver was a thorough Dodson, though a mild one, as small-beer, so long as it is anything, is only describable as very weak ale: and though she had groaned a little in her youth under the yoke of her elder sisters, and still shed occasional tears at their sisterly 30
reproaches, it was not in Mrs Tulliver to be an innovator on the family ideas. She was thankful to have been a Dodson, and to have one child who took after her own

family, at least in his features and complexion, in liking salt and in eating beans, which a Tulliver never did.

In other respects the true Dodson was partly latent in Tom, and he was as far from appreciating his "kin" on the mother's side as Maggie herself; generally absconding for the day with a large supply of the most portable food, when he received timely warning that his aunts and uncles were coming; a moral symptom from which his aunt Glegg deduced the gloomiest views of his future. It was rather
10 hard on Maggie that Tom always absconded without letting her into the secret, but the weaker sex are acknowledged to be serious *impedimenta* in cases of flight.

On Wednesday, the day before, the aunts and uncles were coming, there were such various and suggestive scents, as of plumcakes in the oven and jellies in the hot state, mingled with the aroma of gravy, that it was impossible to feel altogether gloomy: there was hope in the air. Tom and Maggie made several inroads into the kitchen, and, like other marauders, were induced to keep aloof for a time
20 only by being allowed to carry away a sufficient load of booty.

"Tom," said Maggie, as they sat on the boughs of the elder-tree, eating their jam puffs, "shall you run away to-morrow?"

"No," said Tom, slowly, when he had finished his puff, and was eyeing the third, which was to be divided between them—"No, I shan't."

"Why, Tom? Because Lucy's coming?"

"No," said Tom, opening his pocket-knife and holding
30 it over the puff, with his head on one side in a dubitative manner. (It was a difficult problem to divide that very irregular polygon into two equal parts.) "What do I care about Lucy? She's only a girl—*she* can't play at bandy."

"Is it the tipsy-cake, then?" said Maggie, exerting her hypothetic powers, while she leaned forward towards Tom with her eyes fixed on the hovering knife.

"No, you silly, that'll be good the day after. It's the pudden. I know what the pudden's to be—apricot roll-up—oh my buttons!"

With this interjection the knife descended on the puff and it was in two, but the result was not satisfactory to Tom, for he still eyed the halves doubtfully. At last he said—

10

"Shut your eyes, Maggie."

"What for?"

"You never mind what for. Shut 'em, when I tell you."

Maggie obeyed.

"Now, which'll you have, Maggie—right hand or left?"

"I'll have that with the jam run out," said Maggie, keeping her eyes shut to please Tom.

"Why, you don't like that, you silly. You may have it if it comes to you fair, but I shan't give it you without. 20 Right or left—you choose, now. Ha-a-a!" said Tom, in a tone of exasperation, as Maggie peeped. "You keep your eyes shut, now, else you shan't have any."

Maggie's power of sacrifice did not extend so far; indeed, I fear she cared less that Tom should enjoy the utmost possible amount of puff, than that he should be pleased with her for giving him the best bit. So she shut her eyes quite close, till Tom told her to "say which," and then she said, "Left-hand."

"You've got it," said Tom, in rather a bitter tone.

30

"What! the bit with the jam run out?"

"No; here, take it," said Tom, firmly, handing decidedly the best piece to Maggie.

"Oh, please, Tom, have it: I don't mind—I like the other: please take this."

"No, I shan't," said Tom, almost crossly, beginning on his own inferior piece.

Maggie, thinking it was no use to contend further, began too, and ate up her half puff with considerable relish as well as rapidity. But Tom had finished first, and had to look on while Maggie ate her last morsel or two, feeling in himself a capacity for more. Maggie didn't know Tom
10 was looking at her; she was seesawing on the elder bough, lost to almost everything but a vague sense of jam and idleness.

"Oh, you greedy thing!" said Tom, when she had swallowed the last morsel. He was conscious of having acted very fairly, and thought she ought to have considered this, and made up to him for it. He would have refused a bit of hers beforehand, but one is naturally at a different point of view before and after one's own share of puff is swallowed.

20 Maggie turned quite pale. "Oh, Tom, why didn't you ask me?"

"I wasn't going to ask you for a bit, you greedy. You might have thought of it without, when you knew I gave you the best bit."

"But I wanted you to have it—you know I did," said Maggie, in an injured tone.

"Yes, but I wasn't going to do what wasn't fair, like Spouncer. He always takes the best bit, if you don't punch him for it; and if you choose the best with your
30 eyes shut, he changes his hands. But if I go halves, I'll go 'em fair—only I wouldn't be a greedy."

With this cutting innuendo, Tom jumped down from his bough, and threw a stone with a "hoigh!" as a friendly

attention to Yap, who had also been looking on while the catables vanished, with an agitation of his ears and feelings which could hardly have been without bitterness. Yet the excellent dog accepted Tom's attention with as much alacrity as if he had been treated quite generously.

But Maggie, gifted with that superior power of misery which distinguishes the human being, and places him at a proud distance from the most melancholy chimpanzee, sat still on her bough, and gave herself up to the keen sense of unmerited reproach. She would have given the world not to have eaten all her puff, and to have saved some of it for Tom. Not but that the puff was very nice, for Maggie's palate was not at all obtuse, but she would have gone without it many times over, sooner than Tom should call her greedy and be cross with her. And he had said he wouldn't have it—and she ate it without thinking—how could she help it? The tears flowed so plentifully that Maggie saw nothing around her for the next ten minutes; but by that time resentment began to give way to the desire of reconciliation, and she jumped from her bough to look for Tom. He was no longer in the paddock behind the rickyard—where was he likely to be gone, and Yap with him? Maggie ran to the high bank against the great holly-tree, where she could see far away towards the Floss. There was Tom; but her heart sank again as she saw how far off he was on his way to the great river, and that he had another companion besides Yap—naughty Bob Jakin, whose official, if not natural, function, of frightening the birds, was just now at a standstill. Maggie felt sure that Bob was wicked, without very distinctly knowing why; unless it was because Bob's mother was a dreadfully large fat woman, who lived at a queer round house down the river; and once, when Maggie and Tom had wandered

thither, there rushed out a brindled dog that wouldn't stop barking; and when Bob's mother came out after it, and screamed above the barking to tell them not to be frightened, Maggie thought she was scolding them fiercely, and her heart beat with terror. Maggie thought it very likely that the round house had snakes on the floor, and bats in the bedroom: for she had seen Bob take off his cap to show Tom a little snake that was inside it, and another time he had a handful of young bats: altogether,
10 he was an irregular character, perhaps even slightly diabolical, judging from his intimacy with snakes and bats; and to crown all, when Tom had Bob for a companion, he didn't mind about Maggie, and would never let her go with him.

It must be owned that Tom was fond of Bob's company. How could it be otherwise? Bob knew, directly he saw a bird's egg, whether it was a swallow's, or a tomtit's, or a yellow-hammer's; he found out all the wasps' nests, and could set all sorts of traps; he could climb the trees like a
20 squirrel, and had quite a magical power of detecting hedgehogs and stoats; and he had courage to do things that were rather naughty, such as making gaps in the hedgerows, throwing stones after the sheep, and killing a cat that was wandering *incognito*. Such qualities in an inferior, who could always be treated with authority in spite of his superior knowingness, had necessarily a fatal fascination for Tom; and every holiday-time Maggie was sure to have days of grief because he had gone off with Bob.

Well! there was no hope for it: he was gone now, and
30 Maggie could think of no comfort but to sit down by the holly, or wander by the hedgerow, and fancy it was all different, refashioning her little world into just what she should like it to be.

Maggie's was a troublous life, and this was the form in which she took her opium.

Meanwhile Tom, forgetting all about Maggie and the sting of reproach which he had left in her heart, was hurrying along with Bob, whom he had met accidentally, to the scene of a great rat-catching in a neighbouring barn. Bob knew all about this particular affair, and spoke of the sport with an enthusiasm which no one who is not either divested of all manly feeling, or pitjably ignorant of rat-catching, can fail to imagine. For a person suspected of preternatural wickedness, Bob was really not so very villainous-looking ; there was even something agreeable in his snub-nosed face, with its close-curved border of red hair. But then his trousers were always rolled up at the knee, for the convenience of wading on the slightest notice ; and his virtue, supposing it to exist, was undeniably "virtue in rags," which, on the authority even of bilious philosophers, who think all well-dressed merit over-paid, is notoriously likely to remain unrecognised (perhaps because it is seen so seldom). 10

"I know the chap as owns the ferrets," said Bob, in a hoarse treble voice, as he shuffled along, keeping his blue eyes fixed on the river, like an amphibious animal who fore-saw occasion for daring in. "He lives up the Kennel Yard at Sut Ogg's—he does. He's the biggest rot-catcher anywhere—he is. I'd sooner be a rot-catcher nor anything—I would. The moles is nothing to the rots. But Lors ! you mun ha' ferrets. Dogs is no good. Why, there's that dog, now !" Bob continued, pointing with an air of disgust towards Yap, "he's no more good wi' a rot nor nothin'. I see it myself—I did—at the rot-catchin' i' your feyther's barn." 20 30

• Yap, feeling the withering influence of this scorn, tucked his tail in and shrank close to Tom's leg, who felt a little

hurt for him, but had not the superhuman courage to seem behindhand with Bob in contempt for a dog who made so poor a figure.

"No, no," he said, "Yap's no good at sport. "I'll have regular good dogs for rats and everything, when I've done school."

"Hev ferrets, Measter Tom," said Bob, eagerly,—“them white ferrets wi' pink eyes; Lors, you might catch your own rats, an' you might put a rat in a cage wi' a ferret, an' see 'em fight—you might. That's what I'd do, I know, an' it 'ud be better fun a'most nor seein' two chaps fight— if it wasn't them chaps as sold cakes an' oranges at the Fair, as the things flew out o' their baskets, an' some o' the cakes was smashed . . . But they tasted just as good,” added Bob, by way of note or addendum, after a moment's pause.

“But, I say, Bob,” said Tom, in a tone of deliberation, “ferrets are nasty biting things—they'll bite a fellow without being set on.”

“Lors! why, that's the beauty on 'em. If a chap lays hold o' your ferret, he won't be long before he hollows out a good un—he won't.”

At this moment a striking incident made the boys pause suddenly in their walk. It was the plunging of some small body in the water from among the neighbouring bulrushes: if it was not a water-rat, Bob intimated that he was ready to undergo the most unpleasant consequences.

“Hoigh! Yap—hoigh! there he is,” said Tom, clapping his hands, as the little black snout made its arrowy course to the opposite bank, “Seize him, lad, seize him!”

Yap agitated his ears and wrinkled his brows, but declined to plunge, trying whether barking would not answer the purpose just as well.

"Ugh! you coward!" said Tom, and kicked him over, feeling humiliated as a sportsman to possess so poor-spirited an animal, Bob abstained from remark and passed on, choosing, however, to walk in the shallow edge of the overflowing river by way of change.

"He's none so full now, the Floss isn't," said Bob, as he kicked the water up before him, with an agreeable sense of being insolent to it. "Why, last 'ear, the meadows was all one sheet o' water, they was."

"Ay, but," said Tom, whose mind was prone to see an 10
opposition between statements that were really quite accordant—"but there was a big flood once, when the Round Pool was made. *I* know there was, 'cause father says so. And the sheep and cows were all drowned, and the boats went all over the fields ever such a way."

"*I* don't care about a flood comin'," said Bob; "I don't mind the water, no more nor the land. I'd swim—*I* would."

"Ah, but if you got nothing to eat for ever so long?" said Tom, his imagination becoming quite active under the stimulus of that dread. "When I'm a man, I shall make 20
a boat with a wooden house on the top of it, like Noah's ark, and keep plenty to eat in it—rabbits and things—all ready. And then if the flood came, you know, Bob, I shouldn't mind And I'd take you in, if I saw you swimming," he added, in the tone of a benevolent patron.

"I aren't frightened," said Bob, to whom hunger did not appear so appalling. "But I'd get in an' knock the rabbits on th' head when you wanted to eat 'em." 30

"Ah, and I should have halfpence, and we'd play at heads-and-tails," said Tom, not contemplating the possibility that this recreation might have fewer charms for his mature

age. "I'd divide fair to begin with, and then we'd see who'd win."

"I've got a halfpenny o' my own," said Bob, proudly, coming out of the water and tossing his halfpenny in the air. "Yeads or tails?"

"Tails," said Tom, instantly fired with the desire to win.

"It's yeads," said Bob, hastily, snatching up the halfpenny as it fell.

"It wasn't," said Tom, loudly and peremptorily. "You
10 give me the halfpenny—I've won it fair."

"I shan't," said Bob, holding it tight in his pocket.

"Then I'll make you—see if I don't," said Tom.

"You can't make me do nothing, you can't," said Bob.

"Yes, I can."

"No, you can't."

"I'm master."

"I don't care for you."

"But I'll make you care, you cheat," said Tom, collaring Bob and shaking him.

20 "You get out wi' you," said Bob, giving Tom a kick.

Tom's blood was thoroughly up: he went at Bob with a lunge and threw him down, but Bob seized hold and kept it like a cat, and pulled Tom down after him. They struggled fiercely on the ground for a moment or two, till Tom, pinning Bob down by the shoulders, thought he had the mastery.

"You say you'll give me the halfpenny now," he said, with difficulty, while he exerted himself to keep the com-
30 mand of Bob's arms.

But at this moment Yap, who had been running on before, returned barking to the scene of action, and saw a favourable opportunity for biting Bob's bare leg not only

with impunity but with honour. The pain from Yap's teeth, instead of surprising Bob into a relaxation of his hold, gave it a fiercer tenacity, and, with a new exertion of his force, he pushed Tom backward and got uppermost. But now Yap, who could get no sufficient purchase before, set his teeth in a new place, so that Bob, harassed in this way, let go his hold of Tom, and, almost throttling Yap, flung him into the river. By this time Tom was up again, and before Bob had quite recovered his balance after the act of swinging Yap, Tom fell upon him, threw him down, and got his 10 knees firmly on Bob's chest.

"You give me the halfpenny now," said Tom.

"Take it," said Bob, sulkily.

"No, I shan't take it; you give it me."

Bob took the halfpenny out of his pocket, and threw it away from him on the ground.

Tom loosed his hold, and left Bob to rise.

"There the halfpenny lies," he said. "I don't want your halfpenny; I wouldn't have kept it. But you wanted to cheat: I hate a cheat. I shan't go along with you any 20 more," he added, turning round homeward, not without casting a regret towards the rat-catching and other pleasures which he must relinquish along with Bob's society.

"You may let it alone, then," Bob called out after him. "I shall cheat if I like; there's no fun i' playing else; and I know where there's a goldfinch's nest, but I'll take care *you* don't An' you're a nasty fightin' turkey-cock, you are"

Tom walked on without looking round, and Yap followed his example, the cold bath having moderated 30 his passions.

• "Go along wi' you, then, wi' your drowned dog; I wouldn't own such a dog—I wouldn't," said Bob, getting

louder, in a last effort to sustain his defiance. But Tom was not to be provoked into turning round, and Bob's voice began to falter a little as he said—

“An' I'n gi'en you everything, an' showed you everything, an' niver wanted nothin' from you An' there's your horn-handed knife, then, as you gi'en me”

Here Bob slung the knife as far as he could after Tom's retreating footsteps. But it produced no effect, except the sense in Bob's mind that there was a terrible void in his lot,
 10 now that knife was gone.

He stood still till Tom had passed through the gate and disappeared behind the hedge. The knife would do no good on the ground there—it wouldn't vex Tom, and pride or resentment was a feeble passion in Bob's mind compared with the love of a pocket-knife. His very fingers sent entreating thrills that he would go and clutch that familiar rough buck's-horn handle, which they had so often grasped for mere affection as it lay idle in his pocket. And there were two blades, and they had just been sharpened!
 20 What is life without a pocket-knife to him who has once tasted a higher existence? No: to throw the handle after the hatchet is a comprehensible act of desperation, but to throw one's pocket-knife after an implacable friend is clearly in every sense a hyperbole, or throwing beyond the mark. So Bob shuffled back to the spot where the beloved knife lay in the dirt, and felt quite a new pleasure in clutching it again after the temporary separation, in opening one blade after the other, and feeling their edge with his well-hardened thumb. Poor Bob! he was not sensitive on the point of
 30 honour—not a chivalrous character. That fine moral arena would not have been thought much of by the public opinion of Kennel Yard, which was the very focus or heart of Bob's world, even if it could have made itself perceptible there;

yet, for all that, he was not utterly a sneak and a thief, as our friend Tom had hastily decided.

But Tom, you perceive, was rather a Rhadamanthine personage, having more than the usual share of boy's justice in him—the justice that desires to hurt culprits as much as they deserve to be hurt, and is troubled with no doubts concerning the exact amount of their deserts. Maggie saw a cloud on his brow when he came home, which checked her joy at his coming so much sooner than she had expected, and she dared hardly speak to him as he stood silently throwing the small gravel-stones into the mill-dam. It is not pleasant to give up a rat-catching when you have set your mind on it. But if Tom had told his strongest feeling at that moment, he would have said, "I'd do just the same again." That was his usual mode of viewing his past actions; whereas Maggie was always wishing she had done something different.—*Ibid.*

Enter the Aunts and Uncles.

Mrs Tulliver was fond of going upstairs with her sister Pullet, and looking thoroughly at her cap before she put it on her head, and discussing millinery in general. This was 20 part of Bessy's weakness, that stirred Mrs Glegg's sisterly compassion: Bessy went far too well drest, considering; and she was too proud to dress her child in the good clothing her sister Glegg gave her from the primeval strata of her wardrobe; it was a sin and a shame to buy anything to dress that child, if it wasn't a pair of shoes. In this particular, however, Mrs Glegg did her sister Bessy some injustice, for Mrs Tulliver had really made great efforts to induce Maggie to wear a leghorn bonnet and a dyed silk frock made out of her aunt Glegg's, but the 30

results had been such that Mrs Tulliver was obliged to bury them in her maternal bosom ; for Maggie, declaring that the frock smelt of nasty dye, had taken an opportunity of basting it together with the roast-beef the first Sunday she wore it, and, finding this scheme answer, she had subsequently pumped on the bonnet with its green ribbons, so as to give it a general resemblance to a sage cheese garnished with withered lettuces. I must urge in excuse for Maggie that Tom had laughed at her in the
10 bonnet, and said she looked like an old Judy. Aunt Pullet, too, made presents of clothes, but these were always pretty enough to please Maggie as well as her mother. Of all her sisters, Mrs Tulliver certainly preferred her sister Pullet, not without a return of preference ; but Mrs Pullet was sorry Bessy had those naughty awkward children ; she would do the best she could by them, but it was a pity they weren't as good and as pretty as sister Deane's child. Maggie and Tom, on their part, thought their aunt Pullet tolerable, chiefly because she was not their aunt Glegg.
20 Tom always declined to go more than once, during his holidays, to see either of them : both his uncles tipped him that once, of course ; but at his aunt Pullet's there were a great many toads to pelt in the cellar-area, so that he preferred the visit to her. Maggie shuddered at the toads, and dreamed of them horribly, but she liked her uncle Pullet's musical snuff-box. Still, it was agreed by the sisters, in Mrs Tulliver's absence, that the Tulliver blood did not mix well with the Dodson blood ; that, in fact, poor Bessy's children were Tullivers, and that Tom, not-
30 withstanding he had the Dodson complexion, was likely to be as "contrairy" as his father. As for Maggie, she was the picture of her aunt Moss, Mr Tulliver's sister,—a large-boned woman, who had married as poorly as could be ;

had no china, and had a husband who had much ado to pay his rent. But when Mrs Pullet was alone with Mrs Tulliver upstairs, the remarks were naturally to the disadvantage of Mrs Glegg, and they agreed, in confidence, that there was no knowing what sort of fright sister Jane would come out next. But their *tête-à-tête* was curtailed by the appearance of Mrs Deane with little Lucy; and Mrs Tulliver had to look on with a silent pang while Lucy's blond curls were adjusted. It was quite unaccountable that Mrs Deane, the thinnest and sallowest of all the Miss 10 Dodsons, should have had this child, who might have been taken for Mrs Tulliver's any day. And Maggie always looked twice as dark as usual when she was by the side of Lucy.

She did to-day, when she and Tom came in from the garden with their father and their uncle Glegg. Maggie had thrown her bonnet off very carelessly, and, coming in with her hair rough as well as out of curl, rushed at once to Lucy, who was standing by her mother's knee. Certainly the contrast between the cousins was conspicuous, 20 and, to superficial eyes, was very much to the disadvantage of Maggie, though a connoisseur might have seen "points" in her which had a higher promise for maturity than Lucy's natty completeness. It was like the contrast between a rough, dark, overgrown puppy and a white kitten. Lucy put up the neatest little rosebud mouth to be kissed: everything about her was neat—her little round neck, with the row of coral beads; her little straight nose, not at all snubby; her little clear eyebrows, rather darker than her 30 curls, to match her hazel eyes, which looked up with shy pleasure at Maggie, taller by the head, though scarcely a year older. Maggie always looked at Lucy with delight. She was fond of fancying a world where the people never

got any larger than children of their own age, and she made the queen of it just like Lucy, with a little crown on her head, and a little sceptre in her hand . . . only the queen was Maggie herself in Lucy's form.

"Oh, Lucy," she burst out, after kissing her, "you'll stay with Tom and me, won't you? Oh, kiss her, Tom."

Tom, too, had come up to Lucy, but he was not going to kiss her—no; he came up to her with Maggie, because it seemed casier, on the whole, than saying, "How do you
10 do?" to all those aunts and uncles: he stood looking at nothing in particular, with the blushing, awkward air and semi-smile which are common to shy boys when in company—very much as if they had come into the world by mistake, and found it in a degree of undress that was quite embarrassing.

"Heyday!" said aunt Glegg, with loud emphasis. "Do little boys and gells come into a room without taking notice o' their uncles and aunts? That wasn't the way when *I* was a little gell."

20 "Go and speak to your aunts and uncles, my dears," said Mrs Tulliver, looking anxious and melancholy. She wanted to whisper to Maggie a command to go and have her hair brushed.

"Well, and how do you do? And I hope you're good children, are you?" said aunt Glegg, in the same loud emphatic way, as she took their hands, hurting them with her large rings, and kissing their cheeks much against their desire. "Look up, Tom, look up. Boys as go to boarding-schools should hold their heads up. Look at me
30 now." Tom declined that pleasure apparently, for he tried to draw his hand away. "Put your hair behind your ears, Maggie, and keep your frock on your shoulder."

Aunt Glegg always spoke to them in this loud emphatic

way, as if she considered them deaf, or perhaps rather idiotic: it was a means, she thought, of making them feel that they were accountable creatures, and might be a salutary check on naughty tendencies. Bessy's children were so spoiled—they'd need have somebody to make them feel their duty.

"Well, my dears," said aunt Pullet, in a compassionate voice, "you grow wonderful fast. I doubt they'll outgrow their strength," she added, looking over their heads, with a melancholy expression, at their mother. "I think the gell has too much hair. I'd have it thinned and cut shorter, sister, if I was you: it isn't good for her health. It's that as makes her skin so brown. I shouldn't wonder. Don't you think so, sister Deane?" 10

"I can't say, I'm sure, sister," said Mrs Deane, shutting her lips close again, and looking at Maggie with a critical eye.

"No, no," said Mr Tulliver, "the child's healthy enough—there's nothing ails her. There's red wheat as well as white, for that matter, and some like the dark grain best. But it 'ud be as well if Bessy 'ud have the child's hair cut, so as it 'ud lie smooth." 20

A dreadful resolve was gathering in Maggie's breast, but it was arrested by the desire to know from her aunt Deane whether she would leave Lucy behind: aunt Deane would hardly ever let Lucy come to see them. After various reasons for refusal, Mrs Deane appealed to Lucy herself.

"You wouldn't like to stay behind without mother, should you, Lucy?"

"Yes, please, mother," said Lucy, timidly, blushing very pink all over her little neck. 30

"Well done, Lucy! Let her stay, Mrs Deane, let her stay," said Mr Deane, a large but alert-looking man, with

a type of physique to be seen in all ranks of English society — bald crown, red whiskers, full forehead, and general solidity without heaviness. You may see noble-
men like Mr Deane, and you may see grocers or day-
labourers like him ; but the keenness of his brown eyes
was less common than his contour. He held a silver
'snuff-box very tightly in his hand, and now and then ex-
changed a pinch with Mr Tulliver, whose box was only
silver-mounted, so that it was naturally a joke between
10 them that Mr Tulliver wanted to exchange snuff-boxes
also. Mr Deane's box had been given him by the superior
partners in the firm to which he belonged, at the same time
that they gave him a share in the business, in acknowledg-
ment of his valuable services as manager. No man was
thought more highly of in St Ogg's than Mr Deane, and
some persons were even of opinion that Miss Susan Dod-
son, who was once held to have made the worst match of
all the Dodson sisters, might one day ride in a better car-
riage, and live in a better house, even than her sister
20 Pullet. There was no knowing where a man would stop,
who had got his foot into a great mill-owning, ship-owning
business like that of Guest & Co., with a banking concern
attached. And Mrs Deane, as her intimate female friends
observed, was proud and "having" enough : *she* wouldn't
let her husband stand still in the world for want of spurring.

"Maggie," said Mrs Tulliver, beckoning Maggie to her,
and whispering in her ear, as soon as this point of Lucy's
staying was settled, "go and get your hair brushed—do,
for shame. I told you not to come in without going to
30 Martha first ; you know I did."

"Tom, come out with me," whispered Maggie, pulling
his sleeve as she passed him ; and Tom followed willingly
enough.

"Come upstairs with me, Tom," she whispered, when they were outside the door. "There's something I want to do before dinner."

"There's no time to play at anything before dinner," said Tom, whose imagination was impatient of any intermediate prospect.

"Oh, yes, there is time for this—*do* come, Tom."

Tom followed Maggie upstairs into her mother's room, and saw her go at once to a drawer, from which she took out a large pair of scissors.

10

"What are they for, Maggie?" said Tom, feeling his curiosity awakened.

Maggie answered by seizing her front locks and cutting them straight across the middle of her forehead.

"Oh, my buttons, Maggie, you'll catch it!" exclaimed Tom; "you'd better not cut any more off."

Snip! went the great scissors again while Tom was speaking; and he couldn't help feeling it was rather good fun: Maggie would look so queer.

"Here, Tom, cut it behind for me," said Maggie, excited 20 by her own daring, and anxious to finish the deed.

"You'll catch it, you know," said Tom, nodding his head in an admonitory manner, and hesitating a little as he took the scissors.

"Never mind—make haste!" said Maggie, giving a little stamp with her foot. Her cheeks were quite flushed.

The black locks were so thick—nothing could be more tempting to a lad who had already tasted the forbidden pleasure of cutting the pony's mane. I speak to those who know the satisfaction of making a pair of shears meet 30 through a duly resisting mass of hair. One delicious grinding snip, and then another and another, and the hinder-locks fell heavily on the floor, and Maggie stood

cropped in a jagged, uneven manner, but with a sense of clearness and freedom, as if she had emerged from a wood into the open plain.

"Oh, Maggie," said Tom, jumping round her, and slapping his knees as he laughed, "oh, my buttons, what a queer thing you look! Look at yourself in the glass—you look like the idiot we throw our nut-shells to at school."

Maggie felt an unexpected pang. She had thought
10 beforehand chiefly of her own deliverance from her teasing hair and teasing remarks about it, and something also of the triumph she should have over her mother and her aunts by this very decided course of action: she didn't want her hair to look pretty—that was out of the question—she only wanted people to think her a clever little girl, and not to find fault with her. But now, when Tom began to laugh at her, and say she was like the idiot, the affair had quite a new aspect. She looked in the glass, and still
20 Tom laughed and clapped his hands, and Maggie's flushed cheeks began to pale, and her lips to tremble a little.

"Oh, Maggie, you'll have to go down to dinner directly," said Tom. "Oh my!"

"Don't laugh at me, Tom," said Maggie, in a passionate tone, with an outburst of angry tears, stamping, and giving him a push.

"Now, then, spitfire!" said Tom. "What did you cut it off for, then? I shall go down: I can smell the dinner going in."

He hurried downstairs and left poor Maggie to that
30 bitter sense of the irrevocable which was almost an every-day experience of her small soul. She could see clearly enough, now the thing was done, that it was very foolish, and that she should have to hear and think more about

her hair than ever ; for Maggie rushed to her deeds with passionate impulse, and then saw not only their consequences, but what would have happened if they had not been done, with all the detail and exaggerated circumstance of an active imagination. Tom never did the same sort of foolish things as Maggie, having a wonderful instinctive discernment of what would turn to his advantage or disadvantage ; and so it happened, that though he was much more wilful and inflexible than Maggie, his mother hardly ever called him naughty. But if Tom did make a mistake 10 of that sort, he espoused it, and stood by it : he “ didn’t mind.” If he broke the lash of his father’s gig-whip by lashing the gate, he couldn’t help it—the whip shouldn’t have got caught in the hinge. If Tom Tulliver whipped a gate, he was convinced, not that the whipping of gates by all boys was a justifiable act, but that he, Tom Tulliver, was justifiable in whipping that particular gate, and he wasn’t going to be sorry. But Maggie, as she stood crying before the glass, felt it impossible that she should go down 20 to dinner and endure the severe eyes and severe words of her aunts, while Tom, and Lucy, and Martha, who waited at table, and perhaps her father and her uncles, would laugh at her,—for if Tom had laughed at her, of course every one else would ; and if she had only let her hair alone, she could have sat with Tom and Lucy, and had the apricot pudding and the custard ! What could she do but sob ? She sat as helpless and despairing among her black locks as Ajax among the slaughtered sheep. Very trivial, perhaps, this anguish seems to weather-worn mortals who 30 • have to think of Christmas bills, dead loves, and broken friendships ; but it was not less bitter to Maggie—perhaps it was even more bitter—than what we are fond of calling antithetically, the real troubles of mature life. “ Ah, my

child, you will have real troubles to fret about by-and-by," is the consolation we have almost all of us had administered to us in our childhood, and have repeated to other children since we have been grown up. We have all of us sobbed so piteously, standing with tiny bare legs above our little socks, when we lost sight of our mother or nurse in some strange place ; but we can no longer recall the poignancy of that moment and weep over it, as we do over the remembered sufferings of five or ten years ago. Every
10 one of those keen moments has left its trace, and lives in us still, but such traces have blent themselves irrecoverably with the firmer texture of our youth and manhood ; and so it comes that we can look on at the troubles of our children with a smiling disbelief in the reality of their pain. Is there any one who can recover the experience of his childhood, not merely with a memory of what he did and what happened to him, of what he liked and disliked when he was in frock and trousers, but with an intimate penetration, a revived consciousness of what he felt then—when it was
20 so long from one Midsummer to another? what he felt when his schoolfellows shut him out of their game because he would pitch the ball wrong out of mere wilfulness ; or on a rainy day in the holidays, when he didn't know how to amuse himself, and fell from idleness into mischief, from mischief into defiance, and from defiance into sulkiness ; or when his mother absolutely refused to let him have a tailed coat that "half," although every other boy of his age had gone into tails already? Surely if we could recall that early bitterness, and the dim guesses, the strangely perspectiveless conception of life that gave the bitterness its
30 intensity, we should not pooh-pooh the griefs of our children.

"Miss Maggie, you're to come down this minute," said

Kezia, entering the room hurriedly. "Lawks! what have you been a-doing? I niver *see* such a fright."

"Don't, Kezia," said Maggie, angrily. "Go away!"

"But I tell you, you're to come down, miss, this minute: your mother says so," said Kezia, going up to Maggie and taking her by the hand to raise her from the floor.

"Get away, Kezia; I don't want any dinner," said Maggie, resisting Kezia's arm. "I shan't come."

"Oh, well, I can't stay. I've got to wait at dinner," said Kezia, going out again.

10

"Maggie, you little silly," said Tom, peeping into the room ten minutes after, "why don't you come and have your dinner? There's lots o' goodies, and mother says you're to come. What are you crying for, you little spooney?"

Oh, it was dreadful! Tom was so hard and unconcerned; if *he* had been crying on the floor, Maggie would have cried too. And there was the dinner, so nice; and she was *so* hungry. It was very bitter.

But Tom was not altogether hard. He was not inclined to cry, and did not feel that Maggie's grief spoiled his prospect of the sweets; but he went and put his head near her, and said in a lower, comforting tone—

"Won't you come, then, Magsie? Shall I bring you a bit o' pudding when I've had mine? . . . and a custard and things?"

"Ye-e-es," said Maggie, beginning to feel life a little more tolerable.

"Very well," said Tom, going away. But he turned again at the door and said, "But you'd better come, you know. There's the dessert—nuts, you know—and cowslip wine."

Maggie's tears had ceased, and she looked reflective as

Tom left her. His good-nature had taken off the keenest edge of her suffering, and nuts with cowslip wine began to assert their legitimate influence.

Slowly she rose from amongst her scattered locks, and slowly she made her way downstairs. Then she stood leaning with one shoulder against the frame of the dining-parlour door, peeping in when it was ajar. She saw Tom and Lucy with an empty chair between them, and there were the custards on a side-table—it was too much. She
10 slipped in and went towards the empty chair. But she had no sooner sat down than she repented, and wished herself back again.

Mrs Tulliver gave a little scream as she saw her, and felt such a “turn” that she dropt the large gravy-spoon into the dish with the most serious results to the table-cloth. For Kezia had not betrayed the reason of Maggie’s refusal to come down, not liking to give her mistress a shock in the moment of carving, and Mrs Tulliver thought there was nothing worse in question than a fit of perverse-
20 ness, which was inflicting its own punishment by depriving Maggie of half her dinner.

Mrs Tulliver’s scream made all eyes turn towards the same point as her own, and Maggie’s cheeks and ears began to burn, while uncle Glegg, a kind-looking, white-haired old gentleman, said—

“Heyday! what little gell’s this—why, I don’t know her. Is it some little gell you’ve picked up in the road, Kezia?”

“Why, she’s gone and cut her hair herself,” said Mr
30 Tulliver in an under-tone to Mr Deane, laughing with much enjoyment. “Did you ever know such a little hussy as it is?”

“Why, little miss, you’ve made yourself look very funny,”

said uncle Pullet, and perhaps he never in his life made an observation which was felt to be so lacerating.

"Fie, for shame!" said aunt Glegg, in her loudest, severest tone of reproof. "Little gells as cut their own hair should be whipped and fed on bread-and-water—not come and sit down with their aunts and uncles."

"Ay, ay," said uncle Glegg, meaning to give a playful turn to this denunciation, "she must be sent to jail, I think, and they'll cut the rest of her hair off there, and make it all even."

10

"She's more like a gypsy nor ever," said aunt Pullet, in a pitying tone; "it's very bad luck, sister, as the gell should be so brown—the boy's fair enough. I doubt it'll stand in her way i' life to be so brown."

"She's a naughty child, as 'll break her mother's heart," said Mrs Tulliver, with the tears in her eyes.

Maggie seemed to be listening to a chorus of reproach and derision. Her first flush came from anger, which gave her a transient power of defiance, and Tom thought she was braving it out, supported by the recent appearance of the pudding and custard. Under this impression, he whispered, "Oh my! Maggie, I told you you'd catch it." He meant to be friendly, but Maggie felt convinced that Tom was rejoicing in her ignominy. Her feeble power of defiance left her in an instant, her heart swelled, and, getting up from her chair, she ran to her father, hid her face on his shoulder, and burst out into loud sobbing.

"Come, come, my wench," said her father soothingly, putting his arm round her, "never mind; you was i' the right to cut it off if it plagued you; give over crying: father 'll take your part."

• Delicious words of tenderness! Maggie never forgot any of these moments when her father "took her part";

she kept them in her heart, and thought of them long years after, when every one else said that her father had done very ill by his children.

"How your husband does spoil that child, Bessy!" said Mrs Glegg, in a loud "aside," to Mrs Tulliver. "It'll be the ruin of her, if you don't take care. *My* father niver brought his children up so, else we should ha' been a different sort o' family to what we are."

Mrs Tulliver's domestic sorrows seemed at this moment
 10 to have reached the point at which insensibility begins. She took no notice of her sister's remark, but threw back her cap-strings and dispensed the pudding, in mute resignation.

With the dessert there came entire deliverance for Maggie, for the children were told they might have their nuts and wine in the summer-house, since the day was so mild, and they scampered out among the budding bushes of the garden with the alacrity of small animals getting from under a burning-glass.—*Ibid.*

To Garum Firs.

20 The fact was, the day had begun ill with Maggie. The pleasure of having Lucy to look at, and the prospect of the afternoon visit to Garum Firs, where she would hear uncle Pullet's musical-box, had been marred as early as eleven o'clock by the advent of the hairdresser from St Ogg's, who had spoken in the severest terms of the condition in which he had found her hair, holding up one jagged lock after another and saying, "See here! tut—tut—tut!" in a tone of mingled disgust and pity, which to Maggie's imagination was equivalent to the strongest expression of public opinion.
 30 Mr Rappit, the hairdresser, with his well-anointed coronal

locks tending wavily upward, like the simulated pyramid of flame on a monumental urn, seemed to her at that moment the most formidable of her contemporaries, into whose street at St Ogg's she would carefully refrain from entering through the rest of her life.

Moreover, the preparation for a visit being always a serious affair in the Dodson family, Martha was enjoined to have Mrs Tulliver's room ready an hour earlier than usual, that the laying-out of the best clothes might not be deferred till the last moment, as was sometimes the case in families of lax views, where the ribbon-strings were never rolled up, where there was little or no wrapping in silver paper, and where the sense that the Sunday clothes could be got at quite easily produced no shock to the mind. Already, at twelve o'clock, Mrs Tulliver had on her visiting costume, with a protective apparatus of brown holland, as if she had been a piece of satin furniture in danger of flies; Maggie was frowning and twisting her shoulders, that she might if possible shrink away from the prickliest of tuckers, while her mother was remonstrating, "Don't, Maggie, my dear— don't make yourself so ugly!" and Tom's cheeks were looking particularly brilliant as a relief to his best blue suit, which he wore with becoming calmness; having, after a little wrangling, effected what was always the one point of interest to him in his toilet—he had transferred all the contents of his everyday pockets to those actually in wear. 10 20

As for Lucy, she was just as pretty and neat as she had been yesterday: no accidents ever happened to her clothes, and she was never uncomfortable in them, so that she looked with wondering pity at Maggie pouting and writhing under the exasperating tucker. Maggie would certainly have torn it off, if she had not been checked by the re- 30

membrance of her recent humiliation about her hair : as it was, she confined herself to fretting and twisting, and behaving peevishly about the card-houses which they were allowed to build till dinner, as a suitable amusement for boys and girls in their best clothes. Tom could build perfect pyramids of houses ; but Maggie's would never bear the laying on of the roof : it was always so with the things that Maggie made ; and Tom had deduced the conclusion that no girls could ever make anything. But it happened that
10 Lucy proved wonderfully clever at building : she handled the cards so lightly, and moved so gently, that Tom condescended to admire her houses as well as his own, the more readily because she had asked him to teach her. Maggie, too, would have admired Lucy's houses, and would have given up her own unsuccessful building to contemplate them, without ill-temper, if her tucker had not made her peevish, and if Tom had not inconsiderately laughed when her houses fell, and told her she was "a stupid."

"Don't laugh at me, Tom !" she burst out, angrily ; "I'm
20 not a stupid. I know a great many things you don't."

"Oh, I daresay, Miss Spitfire ! I'd never be such a cross thing as you—making faces like that. Lucy doesn't do so. I like Lucy better than you : I wish Lucy was *my* sister."

"Then it's very wicked and cruel of you to wish so," said Maggie, starting up hurriedly from her place on the floor, and upsetting Tom's wonderful pagoda. She really did not mean it, but the circumstantial evidence was against her, and Tom turned white with anger, but said nothing : he
30 would have struck her, only he knew it was cowardly to strike a girl, and Tom Tulliver was quite determined he would never do anything cowardly.

Maggie stood in dismay and terror, while Tom got up

from the floor and walked away, pale, from the scattered ruins of his pagoda, and Lucy looked on mutely, like a kitten pausing from its lapping.

"Oh, Tom," said Maggie, at last, going half-way towards him, "I didn't mean to knock it down—indeed, indeed I didn't."

Tom took no notice of her, but took, instead, two or three hard peas out of his pocket, and shot them with his thumb-nail against the window—vaguely at first, but presently with the distinct aim of hitting a superannuated blue-bottle which was exposing its imbecility in the spring sunshine, clearly against the views of Nature, who had provided Tom and the peas for the speedy destruction of this weak individual. 10

Thus the morning had been made heavy to Maggie, and Tom's persistent coldness to her all through their walk spoiled the fresh air and sunshine for her. He called Lucy to look at the half-built bird's nest without caring to show it Maggie, and peeled a willow switch for Lucy and himself, without offering one to Maggie. Lucy had said, 20 "Maggie, shouldn't *you* like one?" but Tom was deaf.

Still the sight of the peacock opportunely spreading his tail on the stackyard wall, just as they reached Garum Firs, was enough to divert the mind temporarily from personal grievances. And this was only the beginning of beautiful sights at Garum Firs. All the farmyard life was wonderful there—bantams, speckled and top-knotted; Friesland hens, with their feathers all turned the wrong way; Guinea-fowls that flew and screamed and dropped their pretty-spotted feathers; pouter-pigeons and a tame magpie; nay, a goat, 30 and a wonderful brindled dog, half mastiff half bull-dog, as large as a lion. Then there were white railings and white gates all about, and glittering weathercocks of various de-

sign, and garden-walks paved^d with pebbles in beautiful patterns—nothing was quite common at Garum Firs : and Tom thought that the unusual size of the toads there was simply due to the general unusualness which characterised uncle Pullet's possessions as a gentleman farmer. Toads who paid rent were naturally leaner. As for the house, it was not less remarkable : it had a receding centre, and two wings with battlemented turrets, and was covered with glittering white stucco.

- 10 Uncle Pullet had seen the expected party approaching from the window, and made haste to unbar and unchain the front door, kept always in this fortified condition from fear of tramps, who might be supposed to know of the glass-case of stuffed birds in the hall, and to contemplate rushing in and carrying it away on their heads. Aunt Pullet, too, appeared at the doorway, and as soon as her sister was within hearing said, "Stop the children, for God's sake, Bessy—don't let 'em come up the door-steps : Sally's bringing the old mat and the duster, to rub their
20 shoes."

- Mrs Pullet's front-door mats were by no means intended to wipe shoes on : the very scraper had a deputy to do its dirty work. Tom rebelled particularly against this shoe-wiping, which he always considered in the light of an indignity to his sex. He felt it as the beginning of the disagreeables incident to a visit at aunt Pullet's, where he had once been compelled to sit with towels wrapped round his boots ; a fact which may serve to correct the too hasty conclusion that a visit to Garum Firs must have been a
30 great treat to a young gentleman fond of animals—^{five}four, that is, of throwing stones at them.

The next disagreeable was confined to his feminine companions : it was the mounting of the polished oak stairs,

which had very handsome carpets rolled up and laid by in a spare bedroom, so that the ascent of these glossy steps might have served, in barbarous times, as a trial by ordeal from which none but the most spotless virtue could have come off with unbroken limbs. Sophy's weakness about these polished stairs was always a subject of bitter remonstrance on Mrs Glegg's part; but Mrs Tulliver ventured on comment, only thinking to herself it was a mercy when she and the children were safe on the landing.

"Mrs Gray has sent home my new bonnet, Bessy," 10 said Mrs Pullet, in a pathetic tone, as Mrs Tulliver adjusted her cap.

"Has she, sister?" said Mrs Tulliver, with an air of much interest. "And how do you like it?"

"It's apt to make a mess with clothes, taking 'em out and putting 'em in again," said Mrs Pullet, drawing a bunch of keys from her pocket and looking at them earnestly, "but it 'ud be a pity for you to go away without seeing it. There's no knowing what may happen."

Mrs Pullet shook her head slowly at this last serious 20 consideration, which determined her to single out a particular key.

"I'm afraid it'll be troublesome to you getting it out, sister," said Mrs Tulliver, "but I *should* like to see what sort of a crown she's made you."

Mrs Pullet rose with a melancholy air and unlocked one wing of a very bright wardrobe, where you may have hastily supposed she would find the new bonnet. Not at all. Such a supposition could only have arisen from a too superficial acquaintance with the habits of the Dodson 30 family. In this wardrobe Mrs Pullet was seeking something small enough to be hidden among layers of linen—it was a door-key.

"You must come with me into the best room," said Mrs Pullet.

"May the children come too, sister?" inquired Mrs Tulliver, who saw that Maggie and Lucy were looking rather eager.

"Well," said aunt Pullet, reflectively, "it'll perhaps be safer for 'em to come—they'll be touching something if we leave 'em behind."

So they went in procession along the bright and slippery
10 corridor, dimly lighted by the semi-lunar top of the window which rose above the closed shutter: it was really quite solemn. Aunt Pullet paused and unlocked a door which opened on something still more solemn than the passage: a darkened room, in which the outer light, entering feebly, showed what looked like the corpses of furniture in white shrouds. Everything that was not shrouded stood with its legs upwards. Lucy laid hold of Maggie's frock, and Maggie's heart beat rapidly.

Aunt Pullet half-opened the shutter and then unlocked
20 the wardrobe, with a melancholy deliberateness which was quite in keeping with the funereal solemnity of the scene. The delicious scent of rose-leaves that issued from the wardrobe made the process of taking out sheet after sheet of silver paper quite pleasant to assist at, though the sight of the bonnet at last was an anticlimax to Maggie, who would have preferred something more strikingly preternatural. But few things could have been more impressive to Mrs Tulliver. She looked all round it in silence for some moments, and then, said emphatic-
30 ally, "Well, sister, I'll never speak against the full crown again!"

It was a great concession, and Mrs Pullet felt it: she felt something was due to it.

"You'd like to see it on, sister?" she said, sadly. "I'll open the shutter a bit further."

"Well, if you don't mind taking off your cap, sister," said Mrs Tulliver.

Mrs Pullet took off her cap, displaying the brown silk scalp with a jutting promontory of curls which was common to the more mature and judicious women of those times; and, placing the bonnet on her head, turned slowly round, like a draper's lay-figure, that Mrs Tulliver might miss no point of view.

10

"I've sometimes thought there's a loop too much o' ribbon on this left side, sister; what do you think?" said Mrs Pullet.

Mrs Tulliver looked earnestly at the point indicated, and turned her head on one side. "Well, I think it's best as it is; if you meddled with it, sister, you might repent."

"That's true," said aunt Pullet, taking off the bonnet and looking at it contemplatively.

"How much might she charge you for that bonnet, sister?" said Mrs Tulliver, whose mind was actively engaged on the possibility of getting a humble imitation of this *chef-d'œuvre* made from a piece of silk she had at home.

20

Mrs Pullet screwed up her mouth and shook her head, and then whispered, "Pullet pays for it; he said I was to have the best bonnet at Garum Church, let the next best be whose it would."

She began slowly to adjust the trimmings in preparation for returning it to its place in the wardrobe, and her thoughts seemed to have taken a melancholy turn, for she shook her head.

30

• "Ah," she said at last, "I may never wear it twice, sister: who knows?"

"Don't talk o' that, sister," answered Mrs Tulliver. "I hope you'll have your health this summer."

"Ah! but there may come a death in the family, as there did soon after I had my green satin bonnet. Cousin Abbott may go, and we can't think o' wearing crape less nor half a year for him."

• "That *would* be unlucky," said Mrs Tulliver, entering thoroughly into the possibility of an inopportune decease. "There's never so much pleasure i' wearing a bonnet the
10 second year, especially when the crowns are so chancy—never two summers alike."

"Ah, it's the way i' this world," said Mrs Pullet, returning the bonnet to the wardrobe and locking it up. She maintained a silence characterised by head-shaking, until they had all issued from the solemn chamber and were in her own room again. Then, beginning to cry, she said, "Sister, if you should never see that bonnet again till I'm dead and gone, you'll remember I showed it you this day."

20 Mrs Tulliver felt that she ought to be affected, but she was a woman of sparse tears, stout and healthy—she couldn't cry so much as her sister Pullet did, and had often felt her deficiency at funerals. Her effort to bring tears into her eyes issued in an odd contraction of her face. Maggie, looking on attentively, felt that there was some painful mystery about her aunt's bonnet which she was considered too young to understand; indignantly conscious, all the while, that she could have understood that, as well as everything else, if she had been taken into confidence.

30 When they went down, uncle Pullet observed with some acumen that he reckoned the missis had been showing her bonnet—that was what had made them so long upstairs. With Tom the interval had seemed still longer, for he had

been seated in irksome constraint on the edge of a sofa directly opposite his uncle Pullet, who regarded him with twinkling grey eyes, and occasionally addressed him as "Young sir."

"Well, young sir, what do you learn at school?" was a standing question with uncle Pullet; whereupon Tom always looked sheepish, rubbed his hands across his face, and answered, "I don't know." It was altogether so embarrassing to be seated *tête-à-tête* with uncle Pullet, that Tom could not even look at the prints on the walls, or the fly-cages, or the wonderful flower-pots; he saw nothing but his uncle's gaiters. Not that Tom was in awe of his uncle's mental superiority; indeed, he had made up his mind that he didn't want to be a gentleman farmer, because he shouldn't like to be such a thin-legged silly fellow as his uncle Pullet—a molycoddle, in fact. A boy's sheepishness is by no means a sign of overmastering reverence; and while you are making encouraging advances to him under the idea that he is overwhelmed by a sense of your age and wisdom, ten to one he is thinking you extremely queer. The only consolation I can suggest to you is, that the Greek boys probably thought the same of Aristotle. It is only when you have mastered a restive horse, or thrashed a drayman, or have got a gun in your hand, that these shy juniors feel you to be a truly admirable and enviable character. At least, I am quite sure of Tom Tulliver's sentiments on these points. In very tender years, when he still wore a lace border under his outdoor cap, he was often observed peeping through the bars of a gate and making minatory gestures with his small forefinger while he scolded the sheep with an inarticulate burr, intended to strike terror into their astonished minds; indicating thus early that desire for mastery over the inferior animals, wild and

domestic, including cockchafers, neighbours' dogs, and small sisters, which in all ages has been an attribute of so much promise for the fortunes of our race. Now Mr Pullet never rode anything taller than a low pony, and was the least predatory of men, considering fire-arms dangerous, as apt to go off of themselves by nobody's particular desire. So that Tom was not without strong reasons when, in confidential talk with a chum, he had described uncle Pullet as a nincompoop, taking care at the same time to
10 observe that he was a very "rich fellow."

The only alleviating circumstance in a *tête-à-tête* with uncle Pullet was that he kept a variety of lozenges and peppermint drops about his person, and when at a loss for conversation he filled up the void by proposing a mutual solace of this kind.

"Do you like peppermints, young sir?" required only a tacit answer when it was accompanied by a presentation of the article in question.

The appearance of the little girls suggested to uncle
20 Pullet the further solace of small sweet-cakes, of which he also kept a stock under lock and key for his own private eating on wet days; but the three children had no sooner got the tempting delicacy between their fingers than aunt Pullet desired them to abstain from eating it till the tray and the plates came, since with those crisp cakes they would make the floor "all over" crumbs. Lucy didn't mind that much, for the cake was so pretty, she thought it was rather a pity to eat it; but Tom, watching his opportunity while the elders were talking, hastily stowed it in his
30 mouth at two bites, and chewed it furtively. 'As for Maggie, becoming fascinated, as usual, by a print of Ulysses and Nausicaa, which uncle Pullet had bought as a "pretty Scripture thing," she presently let fall her cake, and in an

unlucky movement crushed it beneath her foot—a source of so much agitation to aunt Pullet and conscious disgrace to Maggie, that she began to despair of hearing the musical snuff-box to-day, till, after some reflection, it occurred to her that Lucy was in high favour enough to venture on asking for a tune. So she whispered to Lucy, and Lucy, who always did what she was desired to do, went up quietly to her uncle's knee, and, blushing all over her neck while she fingered her necklace, said, "Will you please play us a tune, uncle?"

10

Lucy thought it was by reason of some exceptional talent in uncle Pullet that the snuff-box played such beautiful tunes, and indeed the thing was viewed in that light by the majority of his neighbours in Garum. Mr Pullet had *bought* the box, to begin with, and he understood winding it up, and knew which tune it was going to play beforehand; altogether, the possession of this unique "piece of music" was a proof that Mr Pullet's character was not of that entire nullity which might otherwise have been attributed to it. But uncle Pullet, when entreated to exhibit his accomplishment, never depreciated it by a too ready consent. "We'll see about it," was the answer he always gave, carefully abstaining from any sign of compliance till a suitable number of minutes had passed. Uncle Pullet had a programme for all great social occasions, and in this way fenced himself in from much painful confusion and perplexing freedom of will.

20

Perhaps the suspense did heighten Maggie's enjoyment when the fairy tune began: for the first time she quite forgot that she had a load on her mind—that Tom was angry with her; and by the time "Hush, ye pretty warbling choir," had been played, her face wore that bright look of happiness, while she sat immovable, with her hands clasped,

30

which sometimes comforted her mother with the sense that Maggie could look pretty now and then, in spite of her brown skin. But when the magic music ceased she jumped up, and, running towards Tom, put her arm round his neck and said, "Oh, Tom, isn't it pretty?"

Lest you should think it showed a revolting insensibility in Tom that he felt any new anger towards Maggie for this uncalled-for and, to him, inexplicable caress, I must tell you that he had his glass of cowslip wine in his hand, and
10 that she jerked him so as to make him spill half of it. He must have been an extreme milksop not to say angrily, "Look there now!" especially when his resentment was sanctioned, as it was, by general disapprobation of Maggie's behaviour.

"Why don't you sit still, Maggie?" her mother said, peevishly.

"Little gells mustn't come to see me if they behave in that way," said aunt Pullet.

"Why, you're too rough, little miss," said uncle Pullet.

20 Poor Maggie sat down again, with the music all chased out of her soul, and the seven small demons all in again.

Mrs Tulliver, foreseeing nothing but misbehaviour while the children remained in-doors, took an early opportunity of suggesting that, now they were rested after their walk, they might go and play out of doors; and aunt Pullet gave permission, only enjoining them not to go off the paved walks in the garden, and if they wanted to see the poultry fed, to view them from a distance on the horse-block,—a restriction which had been imposed ever since Tom had
30 been found guilty of running after the peacock, with an illusory idea that fright would make one of its feathers drop off.—*Ibid.*

Maggie behaves worse than she expected.

Mrs Pullet, observing that it was tea-time, turned to reach from a drawer a delicate damask napkin, which she pinned before her in the fashion of an apron. The door did, in fact, soon open, but instead of the tea-tray, Sally introduced an object so startling that both Mrs Pullet and Mrs Tulliver gave a scream, causing uncle Pullet to swallow his lozenge—for the fifth time in his life, as he afterwards noted.

The startling object which thus made an epoch for uncle Pullet was no other than little Lucy, with one side of her 10 person, from her small foot to her bonnet-crown, wet and discoloured with mud, holding out two tiny blackened hands, and making a very piteous face. To account for this unprecedented apparition in aunt Pullet's parlour, we must return to the moment when the three children went to play out of doors, and the small demons who had taken possession of Maggie's soul at an early period of the day had returned in all the greater force after a temporary absence. All the disagreeable recollections of the morning were thick upon her, when Tom, whose displeasure 20 towards her had been considerably refreshed by her foolish trick of causing him to upset his cowslip wine, said, "Here, Lucy, you come along with me," and walked off to the area where the toads were, as if there were no Maggie in existence. Seeing this, Maggie lingered at a distance, looking like a small Medusa with her snakes cropped. Lucy was naturally pleased that cousin Tom was so good to her, and it was very amusing to see him tickling a fat toad with a piece of string when the toad was safe down 30 the area, with an iron grating over him. Still Lucy wished Maggie to enjoy the spectacle also, especially as she would

doubtless find a name for the toad, and say what had been his past history; for Lucy had a delighted semi-belief in Maggie's stories about the live things they came upon by accident—how Mrs Earwig had a wash at home, and one of her children had fallen into the hot copper, for which reason she was running so fast to fetch the doctor. Tom had a profound contempt for this nonsense of Maggie's, smashing the earwig at once as a superfluous yet easy means of proving the entire unreality of such a story; 10 but Lucy, for the life of her, could not help fancying there was something in it, and at all events thought it was very pretty make-believe. So now the desire to know the history of a very portly toad, added to her habitual affectionateness, made her run back to Maggie and say, "Oh, there is such a big, funny toad, Maggie! Do come and see."

Maggie said nothing, but turned away from her with a deeper frown. As long as Tom seemed to prefer Lucy to her, Lucy made part of his unkindness. Maggie would 20 have thought a little while ago that she could never be cross with pretty little Lucy, any more than she could be cruel to a little white mouse; but then, Tom had always been quite indifferent to Lucy before, and it had been left to Maggie to pet and make much of her. As it was, she was actually beginning to think that she should like to make Lucy cry, by slapping or pinching her, especially as it might vex Tom, whom it was of no use to slap, even if she dared, because he didn't mind it. And if Lucy hadn't been there, Maggie was sure he would have got 30 friends with her sooner.

Tickling a fat toad who is not highly sensitive is an amusement that it is possible to exhaust, and Tom by-and-by began to look round for some other mode of passing

the time. But in so prim a garden, where they were not to go off the paved walks, there was not a great choice of sport. The only great pleasure such a restriction suggested was the pleasure of breaking it, and Tom began to meditate an insurrectionary visit to the pond, about a field's length beyond the garden.

"I say, Lucy," he began, nodding his head up and down with great significance, as he coiled up his string again. "what do you think I mean to do?"

"What, Tom?" said Lucy, with curiosity.

10

"I mean to go to the pond and look at the pike. You may go with me if you like," said the young sultan.

"Oh, Tom, *dare* you?" said Lucy. "Aunt said we mustn't go out of the garden."

"Oh, I shall go out at the other end of the garden," said Tom. "Nobody 'ull see us. Besides, I don't care if they do—I'll run off home."

"But *I* couldn't run," said Lucy, who had never before been exposed to such severe temptation.

"Oh, never mind—they won't be cross with *you*," said 20 Tom. "You say I took you."

Tom walked along, and Lucy trotted by his side, timidly enjoying the rare treat of doing something naughty—excited also by the mention of that celebrity, the pike, about which she was quite uncertain whether it was a fish or a fowl. Maggie saw them leaving the garden, and could not resist the impulse to follow. Anger and jealousy can no more bear to lose sight of their objects than love, and that Tom and Lucy should do or see anything of which she was ignorant would have been an intolerable idea to Maggie. 30 So she kept a few yards behind them, unobserved by Tom, who was presently absorbed in watching for the pike—a highly interesting monster: he was said to be so very old,

so very large, and to have such a remarkable appetite. The pike, like other celebrities, did not show when he was watched for, but Tom caught sight of something in rapid movement in the water, which attracted him to another spot on the brink of the pond.

"Here, Lucy!" he said in a loud whisper, "come here! take care! keep on the grass—don't step where the cows have been!" he added, pointing to a peninsula of dry grass, with trodden mud on each side of it; for Tom's contemptuous conception of a girl included the attribute of being
10 unfit to walk in dirty places.

Lucy came carefully as she was bidden, and bent down to look at what seemed a golden arrow-head darting through the water. It was a water-snake, Tom told her, and Lucy at last could see the serpentine wave of its body, very much wondering that a snake could swim. Maggie had drawn nearer and nearer—she *must* see it too, though it was bitter to her like everything else, since Tom did not care about her seeing it. At last she was close by Lucy, and Tom,
20 who had been aware of her approach, but would not notice it till he was obliged, turned round and said—

"Now, get away, Maggie; there's no room for you on the grass here. Nobody asked *you* to come."

There were passions at war in Maggie at that moment to have made a tragedy, if tragedies were made by passion only; but the essential *τι μέγθος* which was present in the passion was wanting to the action: the utmost Maggie could do, with a fierce thrust of her small brown arm, was to push poor little pink-and-white Lucy into the cow-
30 trodden mud.

Then Tom could not restrain himself, and gave Maggie two smart slaps on the arm as he ran to pick up Lucy, who lay crying helplessly. Maggie retreated to the roots

of a tree a few yards off, and looked on impenitently. Usually her repentance came quickly after one rash deed, but now Tom and Lucy had made her so miserable, she was glad to spoil their happiness—glad to make everybody uncomfortable. Why should she be sorry? Tom was very slow to forgive *her*, however sorry she might have been.

"I shall tell mother, you know, Miss 'Mag," said Tom, loudly and emphatically, as soon as Lucy was up and ready to walk away. It was not Tom's practice to "tell," but here justice clearly demanded that Maggie should be visited with the utmost punishment: not that Tom had learnt to put his views in that abstract form,—he never mentioned "justice," and had no idea that his desire to punish might be called by that fine name. Lucy was too entirely absorbed by the evil that had befallen her—the spoiling of her pretty best clothes, and the discomfort of being wet and dirty—to think much of the cause, which was entirely mysterious to her. She could never have guessed what she had done to make Maggie angry with her; but she felt that Maggie was very unkind and disagreeable, and made no magnanimous entreaties to Tom that he would not "tell," only running along by his side and crying piteously, while Maggie sat on the roots of the tree and looked after them with her small Medusa face.

"Sally," said Tom, when they reached the kitchen door, and Sally looked at them in speechless amaze, with a piece of bread-and-butter in her mouth and a toasting-fork in her hand—"Sally, tell mother it was Maggie pushed Lucy into the mud."

"But Lors ha' massy, how did you get near such mud as that?" said Sally, making a wry face, as she stooped down and examined the *corpus delicti*.

Tom's imagination had not been rapid and capacious

enough to include this question among the foreseen consequences, but it was no sooner put than he foresaw whither it tended, and that Maggie would not be considered the only culprit in the case. He walked quietly away from the kitchen door, leaving Sally to that pleasure of guessing which active minds notoriously prefer to ready-made knowledge.

Sally, as you are aware, lost no time in presenting Lucy at the parlour door, for to have so dirty an object introduced into the house at Garum Firs was too great a weight to be sustained by a single mind.

"Goodness gracious!" aunt Pullet exclaimed, after pre-luding by an inarticulate scream; "keep her at the door, Sally! Don't bring her off the oil-cloth, whatever you do."

"Why, she's tumbled into some nasty mud," said Mrs Tulliver, going up to Lucy to examine into the amount of damage to clothes for which she felt herself responsible to her sister Deane.

"If you please, 'um, it was Miss Maggie as pushed her in," said Sally; "Master Tom's been and said so, and they must ha' been to the pond, for it's only there they could ha' got into such dirt."

"There it is, Bessy; it's what I've been telling you," said Mrs Pullet, in a tone of prophetic sadness: "it's your children—there's no knowing what they'll come to."

Mrs Tulliver was mute, feeling herself a truly wretched mother. As usual, the thought pressed upon her that people would think she had done something wicked to deserve her maternal troubles, while Mrs Pullet began to give elaborate directions to Sally how to guard the premises from serious injury in the course of removing the dirt. Meantime tea was to be brought in by the cook, and the two naughty children were to have theirs

in an ignominious manner' in the kitchen. Mrs Tulliver went out to speak to these naughty children, supposing them to be close at hand ; but it was not until after some search that she found Tom leaning with rather a hardened careless air against the white paling of the poultry-yard, and lowering his piece of string on the other side as a means of exasperating the turkey-cock.

"Tom, you naughty boy, where's your sister?" said Mrs Tulliver, in a distressed voice.

"I don't know," said Tom ; his eagerness for justice on Maggie had diminished since he had seen clearly that it could hardly be brought about without the injustice of some blame on his own conduct. 10

"Why, where did you leave her?" said his mother, looking round.

"Sitting under the tree against the pond," said Tom, apparently indifferent to everything but the string and the turkey-cock.

"Then go and fetch her in this minute, you naughty boy. And how could you think o' going to the pond, and taking your sister where there was dirt? You know she'll do mischief, if there's mischief to be done." 20

It was Mrs Tulliver's way, if she blamed Tom, to refer his misdemeanour, somehow or other, to Maggie.

The idea of Maggie sitting alone by the pond roused a habitual fear in Mrs Tulliver's mind, and she mounted the horse-block to satisfy herself by a sight of that fatal child, while Tom walked—not very quickly—on his way towards her.

"They're such children for the water, mine are," she said aloud, without reflecting that there was no one to hear her ; "they'll be brought in dead and drowned some day. I wish that river was far enough." 30

But when she not only failed to discern Maggie, but presently saw Tom returning from the pool alone, this hovering fear entered and took complete possession of her, and she hurried to meet him.

"Maggie's nowhere about the pond, mother," said Tom ;
"she's gone away."

You may conceive the terrified search for Maggie, and the difficulty of convincing her mother that she was not in the pond. Mrs Pullet observed that the child might come
10 to a worse end if she lived—there was no knowing ; and Mr Pullet, confused and overwhelmed by this revolutionary aspect of things—the tea deferred and the poultry alarmed by the unusual running to and fro—took up his spud as an instrument of search, and reached down a key to unlock the goose-pen, as a likely place for Maggie to lie concealed in.

Tom, after a while, started the idea that Maggie was gone home (without thinking it necessary to state that it was what he should have done himself under the circum-
20 stances), and the suggestion was seized as a comfort by his mother.

"Sister, for goodness' sake let 'em put the horse in the carriage and take me home—we shall perhaps find her on the road. Lucy can't walk in her dirty clothes," she said, looking at that innocent victim, who was wrapped up in a shawl, and sitting with naked feet on the sofa.

Aunt Pullet was quite willing to take the shortest means of restoring her premises to order and quiet, and it was not long before Mrs Tulliver was in the chaise looking
30 anxiously at the most distant point before her. What the father would say if Maggie was lost, was a question that predominated over every other.—*Ibid.*

Maggie tries to run away from her Shadow.

Maggie's intentions, as usual, were on a larger scale than Tom had imagined. The resolution that gathered in her mind, after Tom and Lucy had walked away, was not so simple as that of going home. No! she would run away, and go to the gypsies, and Tom should never see her any more. That was by no means a new idea to Maggie: she had been so often told, she was like a gypsy, and "half wild," that when she was miserable it seemed to her the only way of escaping opprobrium, and being entirely in harmony with circumstances, would be to live in a little brown tent on the commons: the gypsies, she considered, would gladly receive her, and pay her much respect on account of her superior knowledge. She had once mentioned her views on this point to Tom, and suggested that he should stain his face brown, and they should run away together; but Tom rejected the scheme with contempt, observing that gypsies were thieves, and hardly got anything to eat, and had nothing to drive but a donkey. To-day, however, Maggie thought her misery had reached a pitch at which gipsydom was her only refuge, and she rose from her seat on the roots of the tree with the sense that this was a great crisis in her life: she would run straight away till she came to Dunlow Common, where there would certainly be gypsies; and cruel Tom, and the rest of her relations who found fault with her, should never see her any more. She thought of her father as she ran along, but she reconciled herself to the idea of parting with him by determining that she would secretly send him a letter by a small gypsy, who would run away without telling where she was, and just let him know that she was well and happy, and always loved him very much.

Maggie soon got out of breath with running, but by the time Tom got to the pond again she was at the distance of three long fields, and was on the edge of the lane leading to the high-road. She stopped to pant a little, reflecting that running away was not a pleasant thing until one had got quite to the common where the gypsies were, but her resolution had not abated: she presently passed through the gate into the lane, not knowing where it would lead her, for it was not this way that they came from Dowlcote
10 Mill to Garum Firs, and she felt all the safer for that, because there was no chance of her being overtaken. But she was soon aware, not without trembling, that there were two men coming along the lane in front of her: she had not thought of meeting strangers—she had been too much occupied with the idea of her friends coming after her. The formidable strangers were two shabby-looking men with flushed faces, one of them carrying a bundle on a stick over his shoulder: but to her surprise, while she was dreading their disapprobation as a runaway, the man with
20 the bundle stopped, and in a half-whining half-coaxing tone asked her if she had a copper to give a poor man. Maggie had a sixpence in her pocket—her uncle Glegg's present—which she immediately drew out and gave this poor man with a polite smile, hoping he would feel very kindly towards her as a generous person. "That's the only money I've got," she said, apologetically. "Thank you, little miss," said the man in a less respectful and grateful tone than Maggie anticipated, and she even observed that he smiled and winked at his companion. She walked on
30 hurriedly, but was aware that the two men were standing still, probably to look after her, and she presently heard them laughing loudly. Suddenly it occurred to her that they might think she was an idiot: Tom had said that her

cropped hair made her look like an idiot, and it was too painful an idea to be readily forgotten. Besides, she had no sleeves on—only a cape and a bonnet. It was clear that she was not likely to make a favourable impression on passengers, and she thought she would turn into the fields again ; but not on the same side of the lane as before, lest they should still be uncle Pullet's fields. She turned through the first gate that was not locked, and felt a delightful sense of privacy in creeping along by the hedgerows, after her recent humiliating encounter. She was used to wandering about the fields by herself, and was less timid there than on the high-road. Sometimes she had to climb over high gates, but that was a small evil : she was getting out of reach very fast, and she should probably soon come within sight of Dunlow Common, or at least of some other common, for she had heard her father say that you couldn't go very far without coming to a common. She hoped so, for she was getting rather tired and hungry, and until she reached the gypsies there was no definite prospect of bread-and-butter. It was still broad daylight, for aunt Pullet, retaining the early habits of the Dodson family, took tea at half-past four by the sun, and at five by the kitchen clock ; so, though it was nearly an hour since Maggie started, there was no gathering gloom on the fields to remind her that the night would come. Still, it seemed to her that she had been walking a very great distance indeed, and it was really surprising that the common did not come within sight. Hitherto she had been in the rich parish of Garum, where there was a great deal of pasture-land, and she had only seen one labourer at a distance. That was fortunate in some respects, as labourers might be too ignorant to understand the propriety of her wanting to go to Dunlow Common ; yet it would have been better if she could have

met some one who would tell her the way without wanting to know anything about her private business. At last, however, the green fields came to an end, and Maggie found herself looking through the bars of a gate into a lane with a wide margin of grass on each side of it. She had never seen such a wide lane before, and, without her knowing why, it gave her the impression that the common could not be far off: perhaps it was because she saw a donkey with a log to his foot feeding on the grassy margin, for she
10 had seen a donkey with that pitiable encumbrance on Dunlow Common when she had been across it in her father's gig. She crept through the bars of the gate and walked on with new spirit, though not without haunting images of Apollyon, and a highwayman with a pistol, and a blinking dwarf in yellow, with a mouth from ear to ear, and other miscellaneous dangers. For poor little Maggie had at once the timidity of an active imagination and the daring that comes from overmastering impulse. She had rushed into the adventure of seeking her unknown kindred, the
20 gypsies; and now she was in this strange lane, she hardly dared look on one side of her, lest she should see the diabolical blacksmith in his leathern apron grinning at her with arms akimbo. It was not without a leaping of the heart that she caught sight of a small pair of bare legs sticking up, feet uppermost, by the side of a hillock; they seemed something hideously preternatural—a diabolical kind of fungus; for she was too much agitated at the first glance to see the ragged clothes and the dark shaggy head attached to them. It was a boy asleep, and Maggie trotted
30 along faster and more lightly, lest she should wake him: it did not occur to her that he was one of her friends the gypsies, who in all probability would have very genial manners. But the fact was so, for at the next bend in the

lane Maggie actually saw the little semicircular black tent with the blue smoke rising before it, which was to be her refuge from all the blighting obloquy that had pursued her in civilised life. She even saw a tall female figure by the column of smoke—doubtless the gypsy-mother, who provided the tea and other groceries: it was astonishing to herself that she did not feel more delighted. But it was startling to find the gypsies in a lane, after all, and not on a common,—indeed it was rather disappointing; for a mysterious illimitable common, where there were sand-pits 10 to hide in, and one was out of everybody's reach, had always made part of Maggie's picture of gypsy life. She went on, however, and thought with some comfort that gypsies most likely knew nothing about idiots, so there was no danger of their falling into the mistake of setting her down at the first glance as an idiot. It was plain she had attracted attention; for the tall figure, who proved to be a young woman with a baby on her arm, walked slowly to meet her. Maggie looked up in the new face rather tremblingly as it approached, and was reassured by the 20 thought that her aunt Pullet and the rest were right when they called her a gypsy, for this face, with the bright dark eyes and the long hair, was really something like what she used to see in the glass before she cut her hair off.

“My little lady, where are you going to?” the gypsy said, in a tone of coaxing deference.

It was delightful, and just what Maggie expected: the gypsies saw at once that she was a little lady, and were prepared to treat her accordingly.

•“Not any farther,” said Maggie, feeling as if she were 30 saying what she had rehearsed in a dream. “I’m come to stay with *you*, please.”

“That’s pretty; come, then. Why, what a nice little lady

you are, to be sure," said the gypsy, taking her by the hand. Maggie thought her very agreeable, but wished she had not been so dirty.

There was quite a group round the fire when they reached it. An old gypsy woman was seated on the ground nursing her knees, and occasionally poking a skewer into the round kettle that sent forth an odorous steam: two small shock-headed children were lying prone and resting on their elbows something like small sphinxes; and a placid donkey was
10 bending his head over a tall girl, who, lying on her back, was scratching his nose and indulging him with a bite of excellent stolen hay. The slanting sunlight fell kindly upon them, and the scene was really very pretty and comfortable, Maggie thought, only she hoped they would soon set out the tea-cups. Everything would be quite charming when she had taught the gypsies to use a washing-basin, and to feel an interest in books. It was a little confusing, though, that the young woman began to speak to the old one in a language which Maggie did not understand, while the tall
20 girl, who was feeding the donkey, sat up and stared at her without offering any salutation. At last the old woman said—

"What, my pretty lady, are you come to stay with us? Sit ye down and tell us where ye come from."

It was just like a story: Maggie liked to be called pretty lady and treated in this way. She sat down and said—

"I'm come from home because I'm unhappy, and I mean to be a gypsy. I'll live with you if you like, and I can teach
30 you a great many things."

"Such a clever little lady," said the woman with the baby, sitting down by Maggie, and allowing baby to crawl; "and such a pretty bonnet and frock," she added, taking

off Maggie's bonnet and looking at it while she made an observation to the old woman, in the unknown language. The tall girl snatched the bonnet and put it on her own head hind-foremost with a grin ; but Maggie was determined not to show any weakness on this subject, as if she were susceptible about her bonnet.

"I don't want to wear a bonnet," she said, "I'd rather wear a red handkerchief, like yours" (looking at her friend by her side). "My hair was quite long till yesterday, when I cut it off: but I daresay it will grow again very soon," she added apologetically, thinking it probable the gypsies had a strong prejudice in favour of long hair. And Maggie had forgotten even her hunger at that moment in the desire to conciliate gypsy opinion. 10

"Oh, what a nice little lady!—and rich, I'm sure," said the old woman. "Didn't you live in a beautiful house at home?"

"Yes, my home is pretty, and I'm very fond of the river, where we go fishing—but I'm often very unhappy. I should have liked to bring my books with me, but I came away in a hurry, you know. But I can tell you almost everything there is in my books, I've read them so many times—and that will amuse you. And I can tell you something about Geography too—that's about the world we live in—very useful and interesting. Did you ever hear about Columbus?" 20

Maggie's eyes had begun to sparkle and her cheeks to flush—she was really beginning to instruct the gypsies, and gaining great influence over them. The gypsies themselves were not without amazement at this talk, though their attention was divided by the contents of Maggie's pocket, which the friend at her right hand had by this time emptied without attracting her notice. 30

"Is that where you live, my little lady?" said the old woman, at the mention of Columbus.

"Oh no!" said Maggie, with some pity; "Columbus was a very wonderful man, who found out half the world, and they put chains on him and treated him very badly, you know—it's in my Catechism of Geography—but perhaps it's rather too long to tell before tea . . . *I want my tea so.*"

The last words burst from Maggie, in spite of herself, with a sudden drop from patronising instruction to simple
10 peevishness.

"Why, she's hungry, poor little lady," said the younger woman. "Give her some o' the cold victual. You've been walking a good way, I'll be bound, my dear. Where's your home?"

"It's Dorlcote Mill, a good way off," said Maggie. "My father is Mr Tulliver, but we mustn't let him know where I am, else he'll fetch me home again. Where does the queen of the gypsies live?"

"What! do you want to go to her, my little lady?"
20 said the younger woman. The tall girl meanwhile was constantly staring at Maggie and grinning. Her manners were certainly not agreeable.

"No," said Maggie, "I'm only thinking that if she isn't a very good queen you might be glad when she died, and you could choose another. If I was a queen, I'd be a very good queen, and kind to everybody."

"Here's a bit o' nice victual, then," said the old woman, handing to Maggie a lump of dry bread, which she had taken from a bag of scraps, and a piece of cold bacon.

30 "Thank you," said Maggie, looking at the food without taking it; "but will you give me some bread-and-butter and tea instead? I don't like bacon."

"We've got no tea nor butter," said the old woman with

something like a scowl, as if she were getting tired of coaxing.

"Oh, a little bread and treacle would do," said Maggie.

"We han't got no treacle," said the old woman crossly, whereupon there followed a sharp dialogue between the two women in their unknown tongue, and one of the small sphinxes snatched at the bread-and-bacon, and began to eat it. At this moment the tall girl, who had gone a few yards off, came back, and said something which produced a strong effect. The old woman, seeming to forget Maggie's 10 hunger, poked the skewer into the pot with new vigour, and the younger crept under the tent, and reached out some platters and spoons. Maggie trembled a little, and was afraid the tears would come into her eyes. Meanwhile the tall girl gave a shrill cry, and presently came running up the boy whom Maggie had passed as he was sleeping—a rough urchin about the age of Tom. He stared at Maggie, and there ensued much incomprehensible chattering. She felt very lonely, and was quite sure she should begin to cry before long: the gypsies didn't seem to mind 20 her at all, and she felt quite weak among them. But the springing tears were checked by new terror, when two men came up, whose approach had been the cause of the sudden excitement. The elder of the two carried a bag, which he flung down, addressing the women in a loud and scolding tone, which they answered by a shower of treble sauciness; while a black cur ran barking up to Maggie, and threw her into a tremor that only found a new cause in the curses with which the younger man called the dog off, and gave him a rap with a great stick he held in his hand. 30

Maggie felt that it was impossible she should ever be queen of these people, or even communicate to them amusing and useful knowledge.

Both the men now seemed to be inquiring about Maggie, for they looked at her, and the tone of the conversation became of that pacific kind which implies curiosity on one side and the power of satisfying it on the other. At last the younger woman said in her previous deferential coaxing tone—

“This nice little lady’s come to live with us : aren’t you glad?”

“Ay, very glad,” said the younger man, who was looking
10 at Maggie’s silver thimble and other small matters that had been taken from her pocket. He returned them all except the thimble to the younger woman, with some observation, and she immediately restored them to Maggie’s pocket, while the men seated themselves, and began to attack the contents of the kettle—a stew of meat and potatoes—which had been taken off the fire and turned out into a yellow platter.

Maggie began to think that Tom must be right about the gypsies—they must certainly be thieves, unless the
20 man meant to return her thimble by-and-by. She would willingly have given it to him, for she was not at all attached to her thimble; but the idea that she was among thieves prevented her from feeling any comfort in the revival of deference and attention towards her,—all thieves, except Robin Hood, were wicked people. The women saw she was frightened.

“We’ve got nothing nice for a lady to eat,” said the old woman, in her coaxing tone. “And she’s so hungry, sweet little lady.”

30 “Here, my dear, try if you can eat a bit o’ this,” said the younger woman, handing some of the stew on a brown dish with an iron spoon to Maggie, who, remembering that the old woman had seemed angry with her for not liking

the bread-and-bacon, dared not refuse the stew, though fear had chased away her appetite. If her father would but come by in the gig and take her up! Or even if Jack the Giantkiller, or Mr Greatheart, or St George who slew the dragon on the halfpennies, would happen to pass that way! But Maggie thought with a sinking heart that these heroes were never seen in the neighbourhood of St Ogg's—nothing very wonderful ever came there.

Maggie Tulliver, you perceive, was by no means that well-trained, well-informed young person that a small female of eight or nine necessarily is in these days: she had only been to school a year at St Ogg's, and had so few books that she sometimes read the dictionary; so that in travelling over her small mind you would have found the most unexpected ignorance as well as unexpected knowledge. She could have informed you that there was such a word as "polygamy," and being also acquainted with "polysyllable," she had deduced the conclusion that "poly" meant "many"; but she had had no idea that gypsies were not well supplied with groceries, and her thoughts generally were the oddest mixture of clear-eyed acumen and blind dreams.

Her ideas about the gypsies had undergone a rapid modification in the last five minutes. From having considered them very respectful companions, amenable to instruction, she had begun to think that they meant perhaps to kill her as soon as it was dark, and cut up her body for gradual cooking: the suspicion crossed her that the fierce-eyed old man was in fact the devil, who might drop that transparent disguise at any moment, and turn either into the grinning blacksmith or else a fiery-eyed monster with dragon's wings. It was no use trying to eat the stew, and yet the thing she most dreaded was

to offend the gypsies, by betraying her extremely unfavourable opinion of them, and she wondered, with a keenness of interest that no theologian could have exceeded, whether, if the devil were really present, he would know her thoughts.

"What! you don't like the smell of it, my dear," said the young woman, observing that Maggie did not even take a spoonful of the stew. "Try a bit—come."

"No, thank you," said Maggie, summoning all her force
10 for a desperate effort, and trying to smile in a friendly way. "I haven't time, I think—it seems getting darker. I think I must go home now, and come again another day, and then I can bring you a basket with some jam-tarts and things."

Maggie rose from her seat as she threw out this illusory prospect, devoutly hoping that Apollyon was gullible; but her hope sank when the old gypsy-woman said, "Stop a bit, stop a bit, little lady—we'll take you home, all safe, when we've done supper: you shall ride home, like a lady."

20 Maggie sat down again, with little faith in this promise, though she presently saw the tall girl putting a bridle on the donkey, and throwing a couple of bags on his back.

"Now, then, little missis," said the younger man, rising, and leading the donkey forward, "tell us where you live—what's the name o' the place?"

"Dorlcote Mill of my home," said Maggie, eagerly. "My father is Mr Tulliver—he lives there."

"What! a big mill a little way this side o' St Ogg's?"

"Yes," said Maggie. "Is it far off? I think I should
30 like to walk there, if you please."

"No, no, it'll be getting dark, we must make haste. And the donkey'll carry you as nice as can be—you'll see."

He lifted Maggie as he spoke, and set her on the donkey. She felt relieved that it was not the old man who seemed to be going with her, but she had only a trembling hope that she was really going home.

"Here's your pretty bonnet," said the younger woman, putting that recently-despised but now welcome article of costume on Maggie's head; "and you'll say we've been very good to you, won't you? and what a nice little lady we said you was."

"Oh, yes, thank you," said Maggie, "I'm very much 10 obliged to you. But I wish you'd go with me too." She thought anything was better than going with one of the dreadful men alone: it would be more cheerful to be murdered by a larger party.

"Ah, you're fondest o' *me*, aren't you?" said the woman. "But I can't go—you'll go too fast for me."

It now appeared that the man also was to be seated on the donkey, holding Maggie before him, and she was as incapable of remonstrating against this arrangement as the donkey himself, though no nightmare had ever seemed to 20 her more horrible. When the woman had patted her on the back, and said "Good-bye," the donkey, at a strong hint from the man's stick, set off at a rapid walk along the lane towards the point Maggie had come from an hour ago, while the tall girl and the rough urchin, also furnished with sticks, obligingly escorted them for the first hundred yards, with much screaming and thwacking.

Not Leonore, in that preternatural midnight excursion with her phantom lover, was more terrified than poor Maggie in this entirely natural ride on a short-paced 30 donkey, with a gypsy behind her, who considered that he was earning half-a-crown. The red light of the setting sun seemed to have a portentous meaning, with which

the alarming bray of the second donkey with the log on its foot must surely have some connection. Two low thatched cottages—the only houses they passed in this lane—seemed to add to its dreariness: they had no windows to speak of, and the doors were closed: it was probable that they were inhabited by witches, and it was a relief to find that the donkey did not stop there.

At last—oh, sight of joy!—this lane, the longest in the world, was coming to an end, was opening on a broad high-
10 road, where there was actually a coach passing! And there was a finger-post at the corner: she had surely seen that finger-post before—"To St Ogg's, 2 miles." The gypsy really meant to take her home, then: he was probably a good man, after all, and might have been rather hurt at the thought that she didn't like coming with him alone. This idea became stronger as she felt more and more certain that she knew the road quite well, and she was considering how she might open a conversation with the injured gypsy, and not only gratify his feelings but efface
20 the impression of her cowardice, when, as they reached a cross-road, Maggie caught sight of some one coming on a white-faced horse.

"Oh, stop, stop!" she cried out. "There's my father! Oh, father, father!"

The sudden joy was almost painful, and before her father reached her, she was sobbing. Great was Mr. Tulliver's wonder, for he had made a round from Basset, and had not yet been home.

"Why, what's the meaning o' this?" he said, checking
30 his horse, while Maggie slipped from the donkey and ran to her father's stirrup.

"The little miss lost herself, I reckon," said the gypsy. "She'd come to our tent at the far end o' Dudlow Lane,

and I was bringing her where she said her home was. It's a good way to come arter being on the tramp all day."

"Oh, yes, father, he's been very good to bring me home," said Maggie. "A very kind, good man!"

"Here, then, my man," said Mr Tulliver, taking out five shillings. "It's the best day's work *you* ever did. I couldn't afford to lose the little wench; here, lift her up before me."

"Why, Maggie, how's this, how's this?" he said, as they rode along, while she laid her head against her father and sobbed. "How came you to be rambling about and lose yourself?" 10

"Oh, father," sobbed Maggie, "I ran away because I was so unhappy—Tom was so angry with me. I couldn't bear it."

"Pooh, pooh," said Mr Tulliver, soothingly, "you mustn't think o' running away from father. What 'ud father do without his little wench?"

"Oh no, I never will again, father—never."

Mr Tulliver spoke his mind very strongly when he 20 reached home that evening, and the effect was seen in the remarkable fact that Maggie never heard one reproach from her mother, or one taunt from Tom, about this foolish business of her running away to the gypsies. Maggie was rather awe-stricken by this unusual treatment, and sometimes thought that her conduct had been too wicked to be alluded to.—*Ibid.*

c. EPPIE.

By the time Eppie was three years old she developed a fine capacity for mischief, and for devising ingenious ways of being troublesome, which found much exercise, 30 not only for Silas's patience, but for his watchfulness and

penetration. Sorely was poor Silas puzzled on such occasions by the incompatible demands of love. Dolly Winthrop told him that punishment was good for Eppie, and that, as for rearing a child without making it tingle a little in soft and safe places now and then, it was not to be done.

“To be sure, there’s another thing you might do, Master Marner,” added Dolly, meditatively; “you might shut her up once i’ the coal-hole. That was what I did wi’ Aaron;
10 for I was that silly wi’ the youngest lad, as I could never bear to smack him. Not as I could find i’ my heart to let him stay i’ the coal-hole more nor a minute, but it was enough to colly him all over, so as he must be new washed and dressed, and it was as good as a rod to him—that was. But I put it upo’ your conscience, Master Marner, as there’s one of ’em you must choose—ayther smacking or the coal-hole—else she’ll get so masterful, there ’ll be no holding her.”

Silas was impressed with the melancholy truth of this
20 last remark; but his force of mind failed before the only two penal methods open to him, not only because it was painful to him to hurt Eppie, but because he trembled at a moment’s contention with her, lest she should love him the less for it. Let even an affectionate Goliath get himself tied to a small tender thing, dreading to hurt it by pulling, and dreading still more to snap the cord, and which of the two, pray, will be master? It was clear that Eppie, with her short toddling steps, must lead father Silas a pretty dance on any fine morning when circumstances
30 favoured mischief.

For example. He had wisely chosen a broad strip of linen as a means of fastening her to his loom when he was busy: it made a broad belt round her waist, and was long

enough to allow of her reaching the truckle-bed and sitting down on it, but not long enough for her to attempt any dangerous climbing. One bright summer's morning Silas had been more engrossed than usual in "setting up" a new piece of work, an occasion on which his scissors were in requisition. These scissors, owing to an especial warning of Dolly's, had been kept carefully out of Eppie's reach; but the click of them had had a peculiar attraction for her ear, and, watching the results of that click, she had derived the philosophic lesson that the same cause would produce the same effect. Silas had seated himself in his loom, and the noise of weaving had begun; but he had left his scissors on a ledge which Eppie's arm was long enough to reach; and now, like a small mouse, watching her opportunity, she stole quietly from her corner, secured the scissors, and toddled to the bed again, setting up her back as a mode of concealing the fact. She had a distinct intention as to the use of the scissors; and having cut the linen strip in a jagged but effectual manner, in two moments she had run out at the open door where the sunshine was inviting her, while poor Silas believed her to be a better child than usual. It was not until he happened to need his scissors that the terrible fact burst upon him: Eppie had run out by herself—had perhaps fallen into the Stone-pit. Silas, shaken by the worst fear that could have befallen him, rushed out, calling "Eppie!" and ran eagerly about the unenclosed space, exploring the dry cavities into which she might have fallen, and then gazing with questioning dread at the smooth red surface of the water. The cold drops stood on his brow. How long had she been out? There was one hope—that she had crept through the stile and got into the fields, where he habitually took her to stroll. But the grass was high in the meadow, and

there was no desecrating her, if she were there, except by a close search that would be a trespass on Mr Osgood's crop. Still, that misdemeanour must be committed; and poor Silas, after peering all round the hedgerows, traversed the grass, beginning with perturbed vision to see Eppie behind every group of red sorrel, and to see her moving always farther off as he approached. The meadow was searched in vain; and he got over the stile into the next field, looking with dying hope towards a small pond which was now
10 reduced to its summer shallowness, so as to leave a wide margin of good adhesive mud. Here, however, sat Eppie, discoursing cheerfully to her own small boot, which she was using as a bucket to convey the water into a deep hoof-mark, while her little naked foot was planted comfortably on a cushion of olive-green mud. A red-headed calf was observing her with alarmed doubt through the opposite hedge.

Here was clearly a case of aberration in a christened child which demanded severe treatment; but Silas, over-
20 come with convulsive joy at finding his treasure again, could do nothing but snatch her up, and cover her with half-sobbing kisses. It was not until he had carried her home, and had begun to think of the necessary washing, that he recollected the need that he should punish Eppie, and "make her remember." The idea that she might run away again and come to harm gave him unusual resolution; and for the first time he determined to try the coal-hole—a small closet near the hearth.

"Naughty, naughty Eppie," he suddenly began, holding
30 her on his knee, and pointing to her muddy feet and clothes—"naughty to cut with the scissors and run away Eppie must go into the coal-hole for being naughty. Daddy must put her in the coal-hole."

He half-expected that this would be shock enough, and that Eppie would begin to cry. But instead of that, she began to shake herself on his knee, as if the proposition opened a pleasing novelty. Seeing that he must proceed to extremities, he put her into the coal-hole, and held the door closed, with a trembling sense that he was using a strong measure. For a moment there was silence, but then came a little cry, "Opy, opy!" and Silas let her out again, saying, "Now Eppie 'ull never be naughty again, else she must go in the coal-hole—a black naughty place." 10

The weaving must stand still a long while this morning, for now Eppie must be washed, and have clean clothes on; but it was to be hoped that this punishment would have a lasting effect, and save time in future—though, perhaps, it would have been better if Eppie had cried more.

In half an hour she was clean again, and Silas having turned his back to see what he could do with the linen band, threw it down again, with the reflection that Eppie would be good without fastening for the rest of the morning. He turned round again, and was going to place her in her little chair near the loom, when she peeped out at him with black face and hands again, and said, "Eppie in de toal-hole!"—*Silas Marner*, 1861. 20

d. THE POYSER CHILDREN.

And now the little procession set off. Mr Poyser was in his Sunday suit of drab, with a red-and-green waistcoat, and a green watch-ribbon having a large cornelian seal attached, pendant like a plumb-line from that promontory where his watch-pocket was situated; a silk handkerchief of a yellow tone round his neck; and excellent grey ribbed 30

stockings, knitted by Mrs Poyser's own hand, setting off the proportions of his leg. Mr Poyser had no reason to be ashamed of his leg, and suspected that the growing abuse of top-boots and other fashions tending to disguise the nether limbs had their origin in a pitiable degeneracy of the human calf. Still less had he reason to be ashamed of his round jolly face, which was good-humour itself as he said, "Come, Hetty — come, little uns!" and, giving his arm to his wife, led the way through the causeway, 10 gate into the yard.

The "little uns" addressed were Marty and Tommy, boys of nine and seven, in little fustian tailed coats and knee-breeches, relieved by rosy cheeks and black eyes; looking as much like their father as a very small elephant is like a very large one. Hetty walked between them, and behind came patient Molly, whose task it was to carry Totty through the yard, and over all the wet places on the road; for Totty, having speedily recovered from her threatened fever, had insisted on going to church to-day, and es- 20 pecially on wearing her red-and-black necklace outside her tippet. And there were many wet places for her to be carried over this afternoon, for there had been heavy showers in the morning, though now the clouds had rolled off and lay in towering silvery masses on the horizon.

"Mind what the parson says, mind what the parson says, my lads," said Grandfather to the black-eyed youngsters in knee-breeches, conscious of a marble or two in their pockets, which they looked forward to handling a little, secretly, during the sermon.

30 "Dood-bye, dandad," said Totty. "Me doin to church. Me dot my netlace on. Dive me a peppermint."

Grandad, shaking with laughter at this "deep little

wench," slowly transferred his stick to his left hand, which held the gate open, and slowly thrust his finger into the waistcoat-pocket on which Totty had fixed her eyes with a confident look of expectation.

"Why, goodness me," said Mrs Poyser, who had looked back while her husband was speaking, "look where Molly is with them lads. They're the field's length behind us. How *could* you let 'em do so, Hetty? Anybody might as well set a pictur to watch the children as you. Run back and tell 'em to come on."

10

Mr and Mrs Poyser were now at the end of the second field, so they set Totty on the top of one of the large stones forming the true Loamshire stile, and awaited the loiterers; Totty observing with complacency, "Dey naughty, naughty boys—me dood."

The fact was that this Sunday walk through the fields was fraught with great excitement to Marty and Tommy, who saw a perpetual drama going on in the hedgerows, and could no more refrain from stopping and peeping than if they had been a couple of spaniels or terriers. Marty was quite sure he saw a yellowhammer on the boughs of the great ash, and while he was peeping he missed the sight of a white-throated stoat, which had run across the path and was described with much fervour by the junior Tommy. Then there was a little greenfinch, just fledged, fluttering along the ground, and it seemed quite possible to catch it, till it managed to flutter under the blackberry bush. Hetty could not be got to give any heed to these things, so Molly was called on for her ready sympathy, and peeped with open mouth wherever she was told, and said "Lawks!" whenever she was expected to wonder. 30

Molly hastened on with some alarm when Hetty had

come back and called to them that her aunt was angry; but Marty ran on first, shouting, "We've found the speckled turkey's nest, mother!" with the instinctive confidence that people who bring good news are never in fault.

"Ah," said Mrs Poyser, really forgetting all discipline in this pleasant surprise, "that's a good lad; why, where is it?"

10 "Down in ever such a hole, under the hedge. I saw it first, looking after the greenfinch, and she sat on th' nest."
"You didn't frighten her, I hope," said the mother, "else she'll forsake it."

"No, I went away as still as still, and whispered to Molly—didn't I, Molly?"

"Well, well, now come on," said Mrs Poyser, "and walk before father and mother, and take your little sister by the hand. We must go straight on now. Good boys don't look after the birds of a Sunday."

20 "But, mother," said Marty, "you said you'd give half-a-crown to find the speckled turkey's nest. Mayn't I have the half-crown put into my money-box?"

"We'll see about that, my lad, if you walk along now, like a good boy."

The father and mother exchanged a significant glance of amusement at their eldest-born's acuteness; but on Tommy's round face there was a cloud.

"Mother," he said, half crying, "Marty's got ever so much more money in his box nor I've got in mine."

"Munny, *me* want half-a-toun in *my* bots," said Totty.

30 "Hush, hush, hush," said Mrs Poyser, "did ever anybody hear such naughty children? Nobody shall ever see their money-boxes any more, if they don't make haste and go on to church."

This dreadful threat had the desired effect, and through

the two remaining fields the three pair of small legs trotted on without any serious interruption, notwithstanding a small pond full of tadpoles, *alias* "bullheads," which the lads looked at wistfully.—*Adam Bede*, 1859.

c. LILLO'S FUTURE.

On the evening of the 22nd of May 1509 five persons were seated in a handsome upper room opening on to a loggia which, at its right-hand corner, looked all along the Borgo Pinti, and over the city gate towards Fiesole, and the solemn heights beyond it.

At one end of the room was an archway opening into a 10 narrow inner room, hardly more than a recess, where the light fell from above on a small altar covered with fair white linen. Over the altar was a picture, discernible at the distance where the little party sat only as the small full-length portrait of a Dominican Brother. For it was shaded from the light above by overhanging branches and wreaths of flowers, and the fresh tapers below it were unlit. But it seemed that the decoration of the altar and its recess was not complete. For part of the floor was strewn with a confusion of flowers and green boughs, and among them 20 sat a delicate blue-eyed girl of thirteen, tossing her long light-brown hair out of her eyes, as she made selections for the wreaths she was weaving, or looked up at her mother's work in the same kind, and told her how to do it with a little air of instruction.

For that mother was not very clever at weaving flowers or at any other work. Tessa's fingers had not become more adroit with the years—only very much fatter. She got on slowly and turned her head about a good deal, and asked Ninna's opinion with much deference; for Tessa 30

never ceased to be astonished at the wisdom of her children. She still wore her contadina gown: it was only broader than the old one; and there was the silver pin in her rough curly brown hair, and round her neck the memorable necklace, with a red cord under it, that ended mysteriously in her bosom. Her rounded face wore even a more perfect look of childish content than in her younger days: everybody was so good in the world, Tessa thought; even Monna Brigida never found fault with her now, and
10 did little else than sleep, which was an amiable practice in everybody, and one that Tessa liked for herself.

Monna Brigida was asleep at this moment, in a straight-backed arm-chair, a couple of yards off. Her hair, parting backward under her black hood, had that soft whiteness which is not like snow or anything else, but is simply the lovely whiteness of aged hair. Her chin had sunk on her bosom, and her hands rested on the elbow of her chair. She had not been weaving flowers or doing anything else: she had only been looking on as usual, and as usual had
20 fallen asleep.

The other two figures were seated farther off, at the wide doorway that opened on to the loggia. Lillo sat on the ground with his back against the angle of the door-post, and his long legs stretched out, while he held a large book open on his knee, and occasionally made a dash with his hand at an inquisitive fly, with an air of interest stronger than that, excited by the finely-printed copy of Petrarch which he kept open at one place, as if he were learning something by heart.

30 Romola sat nearly opposite Lillo, but she was not observing him. Her hands were crossed on her lap and her eyes were fixed absently on the distant mountains: she was evidently unconscious of anything around her. An eager

life had left its marks upon her : the finely-moulded cheek had sunk a little, the golden crown was less massive ; but there was a placidity in Romola's face which had never belonged to it in youth. It is but once that we can know our worst sorrows, and Romola had known them while life was new.

Absorbed in this way, she was not at first aware that Lillo had ceased to look at his book, and was watching her with a slightly impatient air, which meant that he wanted to talk to her, but was not quite sure whether she would like that entertainment just now. But persevering looks make themselves felt at last. Romola did presently turn away her eyes from the distance and met Lillo's impatient dark gaze with a brighter and brighter smile. He shuffled along the floor, still keeping the book on his lap, till he got close to her and lodged his chin on her knee.

"What is it, Lillo?" said Romola, pulling his hair back from his brow. Lillo was a handsome lad, but his features were turning out to be more massive and less regular than his father's. The blood of the Tuscan peasant was in his veins.

"Mamma Romola, what am I to be?" he said, well contented that there was a prospect of talking till it would be too late to con "Spirto gentil" any longer.

"What should you like to be, Lillo? You might be a scholar. My father was a scholar, you know, and taught me a great deal. That is the reason why I can teach you."

"Yes," said Lillo, rather hesitatingly. "But he is old and blind in the picture. Did he get a great deal of glory?"

"Not much, Lillo. The world was not always very kind to him, and he saw meaner men than himself put

into higher places, because they could flatter and say what was false. And then his dear son thought it right to leave him and become a monk ; and after that, my father, being blind and lonely, felt unable to do the things that would have made his learning of greater use to men, so that he might still have lived in his works after he was in his grave."

"I should not like that sort of life," said Lillo. "I should like to be something that would make me a great
10 man, and very happy besides—something that would not hinder me from having a good deal of pleasure."

"That is not easy, my Lillo. It is only a poor sort of happiness that could ever come by caring very much about our own narrow pleasures. We can only have the highest happiness, such as goes along with being a great man, by having wide thoughts, and much feeling for the rest of the world as well as ourselves ; and this sort of happiness often brings so much pain with it, that we can only tell it from pain by its being what we would choose before everything
20 else, because our souls see it is good. There are so many things wrong and difficult in the world, that no man can be great—he can hardly keep himself from wickedness—unless he gives up thinking much about pleasure or rewards, and gets strength to endure what is hard and painful. My father had the greatness that belongs to integrity—he chose poverty and obscurity rather than false good. And there was Fra Girolamo—you know why I keep to-morrow sacred : he had the greatness which belongs to a life spent in struggling against powerful wrong, and in trying to raise
30 men to the highest deeds they are capable of. And so, my Lillo, if you mean to act nobly and seek to know the best things God has put within reach of men, you must learn to fix your mind on that end, and not on what will

happen to you because of it. And remember, if you were to choose something lower, and make it the rule of your life to seek your own pleasure and escape from what is disagreeable, calamity might come just the same; and it would be calamity falling on a base mind, which is the one form of sorrow that has no balm in it, and that may well make a man say,—‘It would have been better for me if I had never been born.’ I will tell you something, Lillo.”

Romola paused for a moment. She had taken Lillo's cheeks between her hands, and his young eyes were meeting hers. 10

“There was a man to whom I was very near, so that I could see a great deal of his life, who made almost every one fond of him, for he was young, and clever, and beautiful, and his manners to all were gentle and kind. I believe, when I first knew him, he never thought of anything cruel or base. But because he tried to slip away from everything that was unpleasant, and cared for nothing else so much as his own safety, he came at last to commit some of the basest deeds—such as make men infamous. He 20 denied his father, and left him to misery; he betrayed every trust that was reposed in him, that he might keep himself safe and get rich and prosperous. Yet calamity overtook him.”

Again Romola paused. Her voice was unsteady, and Lillo was looking up at her with awed wonder.

“Another time, my Lillo—I will tell you another time. See, there are our old Piero di Cosimo and Nello coming up the Borgo Pinti, bringing us their flowers. Let us go and wave our hands to them, that they may know we see 30 them.”—*Romola*, 1863.

III. COUNTRY SCENES.

a. DORLCOTE MILL.

A WIDE plain, where the broadening Floss hurries on between its green banks to the sea, and the loving tide, rushing to meet it, checks its passage with an impetuous embrace. On this mighty tide the black ships—laden with the fresh-scented fir-planks, with rounded sacks of oil-bearing seed, or with the dark glitter of coal—are borne along to the town of St Ogg's, which shows its aged, fluted red roofs and the broad gables of its wharves between the low wooded hill and the river brink, tinging
 10 the water with a soft purple hue under the transient glance of this February sun. Far away on each hand stretch the rich pastures, and the patches of dark earth, made ready for the seed of broad-leaved green crops, or touched already with the tint of the tender-bladed autumn-sown corn. There is a remnant still of the last year's gold clusters of beech ricks rising at intervals beyond the hedgerows; and everywhere the hedgerows are studded with trees: the distant ships seem to be lifting their masts and stretching their red-brown sails close among the
 20 branches of the spreading ash. Just by the red-roofed town the tributary Ripple flows with a lively current into the Floss. How lovely the little river is, with its dark,

changing wavelets! It seems to me like a living companion while I wander along the bank and listen to its low placid voice, as to the voice of one who is deaf and loving. I remember those large dipping willows. I remember the stone bridge.

And this is Dorlcote Mill. I must stand a minute or here on the bridge and look at it, though the clouds are threatening, and it is far on in the afternoon. Even in this leafless time of departing February it is pleasant to look at—perhaps the chill damp season adds a charm to the trimly-kept, comfortable dwelling-house, as old as the elms and chestnuts that shelter it from the northern blast. The stream is brimful now, and lies high in this little withy plantation, and half drowns the grassy fringe of the croft in front of the house. As I look at the full stream, the vivid grass, the delicate bright-green powder softening the outline of the great trunks and branches that gleam from under the bare purple boughs, I am in love with moistness, and envy the white ducks that are dipping their heads far into the water here among the withes, unmindful of the awkward appearance they make in the drier world above.

The rush of the water, and the booming of the mill, bring a dreamy deafness, which seems to heighten the peacefulness of the scene. They are like a great curtain of sound, shutting one out from the world beyond. And now there is the thunder of the huge covered waggon coming home with sacks of grain. That honest waggoner is thinking of his dinner, getting sadly dry in the oven at this late hour; but he will not touch it till he has fed his horses,—the strong, submissive, meek-eyed beasts, who, I fancy, are looking mild reproach at him from between their blinkers, that he should crack his whip at them in that awful manner as if they needed that hint!

See how they stretch their shoulders up the slope towards the bridge, with all the more energy because they are so near home. Look at their grand shaggy feet that seem to grasp the firm earth, at the patient strength of their necks, bowed under the heavy collar, at the mighty muscles of their struggling haunches! I should like well to hear them neigh over their hardly-earned feed of corn, and see them, with their moist necks freed from the harness, dipping their eager nostrils into the muddy pond. Now they
 10 are on the bridge, and down they go again at a swifter pace, and the arch of the covered waggon disappears at the turning behind the trees.

Now I can turn my eyes towards the mill again, and watch the unresting wheel sending out its diamond jets of water. That little girl is watching it too: she has been standing on just the same spot at the edge of the water ever since I paused on the bridge. And that queer white cur with the brown ear seems to be leaping and barking in ineffectual remonstrance with the wheel; per-
 20 haps he is jealous, because his playfellow in the beaver bonnet is so rapt in its movement. It is time the little playfellow went in, I think; and there is a very bright fire to tempt her: the red light shines out under the deepening grey of the sky. It is time, too, for me to leave off resting my arms on the cold stone of this bridge.—*The Mill on the Floss.*

b. THE HALL FARM.

Evidently that gate is never opened: for the long grass and the great hemlocks grow close against it; and if it were opened, it is so rusty, that the force necessary to
 30 turn it on its hinges would be likely to pull down the

square stone-built pillars, to the detriment of the two stone liqnesses which grin with a doubtful carnivorous affability above a coat of arms surmounting each of the pillars. It would be easy enough, by the aid of the nicks in the stone pillars, to climb over the brick wall with its smooth stone coping; but by putting our eyes close to the rusty bars of the gate we can see the house well enough, and all but the very corners of the grassy enclosure.

It is a very fine old place, of red brick, softened by a 10 pale powdery lichen, which has dispersed itself with happy irregularity, so as to bring the red brick into terms of friendly companionship with the limestone ornaments surrounding the three gables, the windows, and the door-place. But the windows are patched with wooden panes, and the door, I think, is like the gate—it is never opened: how it would groan and grate against the stone floor if it were! For it is a solid, heavy, handsome door, and must once have been in the habit of shutting with a sonorous bang behind a liveried lackey, who had just seen his master 20 and mistress off the grounds in a carriage and pair.

But at present one might fancy the house in the early stage of a chancery suit, and that the fruit from that grand double row of walnut-trees on the right hand of the enclosure would fall and rot among the grass, if it were not that we heard the booming bark of dogs echoing from great buildings at the back. And now the half-weaned calves, that have been sheltering themselves in a gorse-built hovel against the left-hand wall, come out and set up a silly answer to that terrible bark, doubtless supposing that it 30 has reference to buckets of milk.

• Yes, the house must be inhabited, and we will see by whom; for imagination is a licensed trespasser,—it has no

fear of dogs, but may climb over walls and peep in at windows with impunity. Put your face to one of the glass panes in the right-hand window : what do you see? A large open fireplace, with rusty dogs in it, and a bare boarded floor ; at the far end, fleeces of wool stacked up ; in the middle of the floor, some empty corn-bags. That is the furniture of the dining-room. And what through the left-hand window? Several clothes-horses, a pillion, a spinning-wheel, and an old box wide open, and stuffed
10 full of coloured rags. At the edge of this box there lies a great wooden doll, which, so far as mutilation is concerned, bears a strong resemblance to the finest Greek sculpture, and especially in the total loss of its nose. Near it there is a little chair, and the butt-end of a boy's leather long-lashed whip.

The history of the house is plain now. It was once the residence of a country squire, whose family, probably dwindling down to mere spinsterhood, got merged in the more territorial name of Donnithorne. It was once the
20 Hall ; it is now the Hall Farm. Like the life in some coast-town that was once a watering-place, and is now a port, where the genteel streets are silent and grass-grown, and the docks and warehouses busy and resonant, the life at the Hall has changed its focus, and no longer radiates from the parlour, but from the kitchen and the farmyard.

Plenty of life there ! though this is the drowsiest time of the year, just before hay-harvest ; and it is the drowsiest time of the day too, for it is close upon three by the sun, and it is half-past three by Mrs Poyser's handsome eight-
30 day clock. But there is always a stronger sense of life when the sun is brilliant after rain ; and now he is pouring down his beams, and making sparkles among the wet straw, and lighting up every patch of vivid green moss on

the red tiles of the cow-shed, and turning even the muddy water that is hurrying along the channel to the drain into a mirror for the yellow-billed ducks, who are seizing the opportunity of getting a drink with as much body in it as possible. There is quite a concert of noises: the great bull-dog, chained against the stables, is thrown into furious exasperation by the unwary approach of a cock too near the mouth of his kennel, and sends forth a thundering bark, which is answered by two fox-hounds shut up in the opposite cow-house; the old top-knotted hens, scratching with their chicks among the straw, set up a sympathetic croaking as the discomfited cock joins them; a sow with her brood, all very muddy, as to the legs, and curled as to the tail, throws in some deep staccato notes; our friends the calves are bleating from the home croft; and, under all, a fine ear discerns the continuous hum of human voices.

Adam walked round by the rick-yard, at present empty of ricks, to the little wooden gate leading into the garden—once the well-tended kitchen-garden of a manor-house; now, but for the handsome brick wall with stone coping that ran along one side of it, a true farmhouse garden, with hardy perennial flowers, unpruned fruit-trees, and kitchen vegetables growing together in careless, half-neglected abundance. In that leafy, flowery, bushy time, to look for any one in this garden was like playing at “hide-and-seek.” There were the tall hollyhocks beginning to flower, and dazzle the eye with their pink, white, and yellow; there were the syringas and Gueldres roses, all large and disorderly for want of trimming; there were leafy walls of scarlet beans and late peas; there was a row of bushy filberts in one direction, and in another a huge apple-

tree making a barren circle under its low-spreading boughs. But what signified a barren patch or two? The garden was so large. There was always a superfluity of broad beans—it took nine or ten of Adam's strides to get to the end of the uncut grass walk that ran by the side of them; and as for other vegetables, there was so much more room than was necessary for them, that in the rotation of crops a large flourishing bed of groundsel was of yearly occurrence on one spot or other. The very rose-trees, at which Adam stopped to pluck one, looked as if they grew wild; they were all huddled together in bushy masses, now flaunting with wide open petals, almost all of them of the streaked pink-and-white kind, which doubtless dated from the union of the houses of York and Lancaster. Adam was wise enough to choose a compact Provence rose that peeped out half-smothered by its flaunting scentless neighbours, and held it in his hand—he thought he should be more at ease holding something in his hand—as he walked on to the far end of the garden, where he remembered there was the largest row of currant-trees, not far off from the great yew-tree arbour.—*Adam Bede.*

c. HAYSLOPE VILLAGE.

The Green lay at the extremity of the village, and from it the road branched off in two directions, one leading farther up the hill by the church, and the other winding gently down towards the valley. On the side of the Green that led towards the church, the broken line of thatched cottages was continued nearly to the churchyard gate; but on the opposite, north-western side, there was nothing to obstruct the view of gently swelling meadow, and wooded valley, and dark masses of distant hill. That

rich undulating district of Loamshire to which Hayslope belonged lies close to a grim outskirts of Stonyshire, overlooked by its barren hills as a pretty blooming sister may sometimes be seen linked in the arm of a rugged, tall, swarthy brother; and in two or three hours' ride the traveller might exchange a bleak treeless region, intersected by lines of cold grey stone, for one where his road wound under the shelter of woods, or up swelling hills, muffled with hedgerows and long meadow-grass and thick corn; and where at every turn he came upon some 10 fine old country-seat nestled in the valley or crowning the slope, some homestead with its long length of barn and its cluster of golden ricks, some grey steeple looking out from a pretty confusion of trees and thatch and dark-red tiles. It was just such a picture as this last that Hayslope Church had made to the traveller as he began to mount the gentle slope leading to its pleasant uplands, and now from his station near the Green he had before him in one view nearly all the other typical features of this pleasant land. High up against the horizon were the 20 huge conical masses of hill, like giant mounds intended to fortify this region of corn and grass against the keen and hungry winds of the north; not distant enough to be clothed in purple mystery, but with sombre greenish sides visibly specked with sheep, whose motion was only revealed by memory, not detected by sight; wooded from day to day by the changing hours, but responding with no change in themselves—left for ever grim and sullen after the flush of morning, the winged gleams of the April moonday, the parting crimson glory of the ripening summer 30 sun. And directly below them the eye rested on a more advanced line of hanging woods, divided by bright patches of pasture or furrowed crops, and not yet deepened into

the uniform leafy curtains of high summer, but still showing the warm tints of the young oak and the tender green of the ash and lime. Then came the valley, where the woods grew thicker, as if they had rolled down and hurried together from the patches left smooth on the slope, that they might take the better care of the tall mansion which lifted its parapets and sent its faint blue summer smoke among them. Doubtless there was a large sweep of park and a broad glassy pool in front of that mansion, but the
10 swelling slope of meadow would not let our traveller see them from the village green. He saw instead a foreground which was just as lovely — the level sunlight lying like transparent gold among the gently-curving stems of the feathered grass and the tall red sorrel, and the white umbels of the hemlocks lining the bushy hedgerows. It was that moment in summer when the sound of the scythe being whetted makes us cast more lingering looks at the
18 flower-sprinkled tresses of the meadows,—*Ibid.*

IV. PORTRAITS.

a. THE REV. AMOS AND MRS BARTON.

AND now, pray, can you solve me the following problem? Given a man with a wife and six children: let him be obliged always to exhibit himself when outside his own door in a suit of black broadcloth, such as will not undermine the foundations of the Establishment by a paltry plebeian glossiness or an unseemly whiteness at the edges; in a snowy cravat, which is a serious investment of labour in the hemming, starching, and ironing departments; and in a hat which shows no symptom of taking to the hideous doctrine of expediency, and shaping itself according to circumstances; let him have a parish large enough to create an external necessity for abundant shoe-leather, and an internal necessity for abundant beef and mutton, as well as poor enough to require frequent priestly consolation in the shape of shillings and sixpences; and, lastly, let him be compelled, by his own pride and other people's, to dress his wife and children with gentility from bonnet-strings to shoe-strings. By what process of division can the sum of eighty pounds per annum be made to yield a quotient which will cover that man's weekly expenses? This was the problem presented by the position of the

Rev. Amos Barton, as curate of Shepperton, rather more than twenty years ago.

Look at him as he winds through the little churchyard! The silver light that falls aslant on church and tomb, enables you to see his slim black figure, made all the slimmer by tight pantaloons, as it flits past the pale grave-stones. He walks with a quick step, and is now rapping with sharp decision at the vicarage door. It is opened without delay by the nurse, cook, and housemaid, all at
10 once—that is to say, by the robust maid-of-all-work, Nanny; and as Mr Barton hangs up his hat in the passage, you see that a narrow face of no particular complexion—even the small-pox that has attacked it seems to have been of a mongrel, indefinite kind—with features of no particular shape, and an eye of no particular expression, is surmounted by a slope of baldness gently rising from brow to crown. You judge him, rightly, to be about forty. The house is quiet, for it is half-past ten, and the children have long been gone to bed. He opens
20 the sitting-room door, but instead of seeing his wife, as he expected, stitching with the nimblest of fingers by the light of one candle, he finds her dispensing with the light of a candle altogether. She is softly pacing up and down by the red firelight, holding in her arms little Walter, the year-old baby, who looks over her shoulder with large wide-open eyes, while the patient mother pats his back with her soft hand, and glances with a sigh at the heap of large and small stockings lying unmended on the table.

She was a lovely woman—Mrs Amos Barton; a large,
30 fair, gentle Madonna, with thick, close, chestnut curls beside her well-rounded cheeks, and with large, tender, short-sighted eyes. The flowing lines of her tall figure

made the limpest dress look graceful, and her old frayed black silk seemed to repose on her bust and limbs with a placid elegance and sense of distinction, in strong contrast with the uneasy sense of being no fit, that seemed to express itself in the rustling of Mrs Farquhar's *gros de Naples*. The caps she wore would have been pronounced, when off her head, utterly heavy and hideous—for in those days even fashionable caps were large and floppy; but surmounting her long arched neck, and mingling their borders of cheap lace and ribbon with her chestnut curls, they seemed 10 miracles of successful millinery. Among strangers she was shy and tremulous as a girl of fifteen; she blushed crimson if any one appealed to her opinion; yet that tall, graceful, substantial presence was so imposing in its mildness, that men spoke to her with an agreeable sensation of timidity.

Soothing, unspeakable charm of gentle womanhood! which supersedes all acquisitions, all accomplishments. . . . Amos was an affectionate husband, and, in his way, valued his wife as his best treasure.

But now he has shut the door behind him, and said, 20 “Well, Milly!”

“Well, dear!” was the corresponding greeting, made eloquent by a smile.

“So that young rascal won’t go to sleep! Can’t you give him to Nanny?”

“Why, Nanny has been busy ironing this evening; but I think I’ll take him to her now.” And Mrs Barton glided towards the kitchen, while her husband ran upstairs to put on his maize-coloured dressing-gown, in which costume he 30 was quietly filling his long pipe when his wife returned to the sitting-room. Maize is a colour that decidedly did *not* suit his complexion, and it is one that soon soils; why, then, did Mr Barton select it for domestic wear? Perhaps

because he had a knack of hitting on the wrong thing in garb as well as in grammar.

Mrs Barton now lighted her candle, and seated herself before her heap of stockings. She had something disagreeable to tell her husband, but she would not enter on it at once.

"Have you had a nice evening, dear?"

"Yes, pretty well. Ely was there to dinner, but went away rather early. Miss Arabella is setting her cap at him
10 with a vengeance. But I don't think he's much smitten. I've a notion Ely's engaged to some one at a distance, and will astonish all the ladies who are languishing for him here, by bringing home his bride one of these days. 'Ely's a sly dog; he'll like that.'

"Did the Farquhars say anything about the singing last Sunday?"

"Yes; Farquhar said he thought it was time there was some improvement in the choir. But he was rather scandalised at my setting the tune of 'Lydia.' He says he's
20 always hearing it as he passes the Independent meeting." Here Mr Barton laughed—he had a way of laughing at criticisms that other people thought damaging—and thereby showed the remainder of a set of teeth which, like the remnants of the Old Guard, were few in number and very much the worse for wear. "But," he continued, "Mrs Farquhar talked the most about Mr Bridmain and the Countess. She has taken up all the gossip about them, and wanted to convert me to her opinion, but I told her pretty strongly what I thought."

30 "Dear me! why will people take so much pains to find out evil about others? I have had a note from the Countess since you went, asking us to dine with them on Friday."

Here Mrs Barton reached the note from the mantel-piece, and gave it to her husband. We will look over his shoulder while he reads it:—

“SWEETEST MILLY,—Bring your lovely face with your husband to dine with us on Friday at seven—do. If not, I will be sulky with you till Sunday, when I shall be obliged to see you, and shall long to kiss you that very moment.—Yours, according to your answer,

“CAROLINE CZERLASKI.”

“Just like her, isn’t it?” said Mrs Barton. “I suppose 10
we can go?”

“Yes; I have no engagement. The Clerical Meeting is to-morrow, you know.”

“And, dear, Woods the butcher called, to say he must have some money next week. He has a payment to make up.”

This announcement made Mr Barton thoughtful. He puffed more rapidly, and looked at the fire.

“I think I must ask Hackit to lend me twenty pounds, for it is nearly two months till Lady-day, and we can’t give 20
Woods our last shilling.”

“I hardly like you to ask Mr Hackit, dear—he and Mrs Hackit have been so very kind to us; they have sent us so many things lately.”

“Then I must ask Oldinport. I’m going to write to him to-morrow morning, for to tell him the arrangement I’ve been thinking of about having service in the work-house while the church is being enlarged. If he agrees to attend service there once or twice, the other people will come. Net the large fish, and you’re sure to have the 30
small fry.”

"I wish we could do without borrowing money, and yet I don't see how we can. Poor Fred must have some new shoes; I couldn't let him go to Mrs Bond's yesterday because his toes were peeping out, dear child! and I can't let him walk anywhere except in the garden. He must have a pair before Sunday. Really, boots and shoes are the greatest trouble of my life. Everything else one can turn and turn about, and make old look like new; but there's no coaxing boots and shoes to look better than they are."

Mrs Barton was playfully undervaluing her skill in metamorphosing boots and shoes. She had at that moment on her feet a pair of slippers which had long ago lived through the prunella phase of their existence, and were now running a respectable career as black silk slippers, having been neatly covered with that material by Mrs Barton's own neat fingers. Wonderful fingers those! they were never empty; for if she went to spend a few hours with a friendly parishioner, out came her thimble and a piece of
20 calico or muslin, which, before she left, had become a mysterious little garment with all sorts of hemmed ins and outs. She was even trying to persuade her husband to leave off tight pantaloons, because if he would wear the ordinary gun-cases, she knew she could make them so well that no one would suspect the sex of the tailor.

But by this time Mr Barton has finished his pipe, the candle begins to burn low, and Mrs Barton goes to see if Nanny has succeeded in lulling Walter to sleep. Nanny is at that moment putting him in the little cot by his mother's
30 bedside; the head, with its thin wavelets of brown hair, indents the little pillow; and a tiny, waxen, dimpled fist hides the rosy lips, for baby is given to the infantine pécadillo of thumb-sucking.

So Nanny could now join in the short evening prayer, and all could go to bed.

Mrs Barton carried upstairs the remainder of her heap of stockings, and laid them on a table close to her bedside, where also she placed a warm shawl, removing her candle, before she put it out, to a tin socket fixed at the head of her bed. Her body was very weary, but her heart was not heavy, in spite of Mr Woods the butcher, and the transitory nature of shoe-leathers; for her heart so overflowed with love, she felt sure she was near a fountain of love 10 that would care for husband and babes better than she could foresee; so she was soon asleep. But about half-past five o'clock in the morning, if there were any angels watching round her bed—and angels might be glad of such an office—they saw Mrs Barton rise up quietly, careful not to disturb the slumbering Amos, who was snoring the snore of the just, light her candle, prop herself upright with the pillows, throw the warm shawl round her shoulders, and renew her attack on the heap of undarned stockings. She darned away until she heard Nanny stirring, and then 20 drowsiness came with the dawn; the candle was put out, and she sank into a doze. But at nine o'clock she was at the breakfast-table, busy cutting bread-and-butter for five hungry mouths, while Nanny, baby on one arm, in rosy cheeks, fat neck, and night-gown, brought in a jug of hot milk-and-water. Nearest her mother sits the nine-year-old Patty, the eldest child, whose sweet fair face, is already rather grave sometimes, and who always wants to run up- stairs to save Mamma's legs, which get so tired of an evening. Then there are four other, blond heads—two 30 boys and two girls, gradually decreasing in size down to Chubby, who is making a round O of her mouth to receive a bit of papa's "baton." Papa's attention was divided

between petting Chubby, rebuking the noisy Fred, which he did with a somewhat excessive sharpness, and eating his own breakfast. He had not yet looked at Mamma, and did not know that her cheek was paler than usual. But Patty whispered, "Mamma, have you the headache?"—*Scenes of Clerical Life*. "The Sad Fortunes of the Rev. Amos Barton," 1857.

b. THE REV. MAYNARD GILFIL.

When old Mr Gilfil died, thirty years ago, there was general sorrow in Shepperton; and if black cloth had not
 10 been hung round the pulpit and reading-desk, by order of his nephew and principal legatee, the parishioners would certainly have subscribed the necessary sum out of their own pockets, rather than allow such a tribute of respect to be wanting. All the farmers' wives brought out their black bombasines; and Mrs Jennings, at the Wharf, by appearing the first Sunday after Mr Gilfil's death in her salmon-coloured ribbons and green shawl, excited the severest remark. To be sure, Mrs Jennings was a new-comer, and town-bred, so that she could hardly be expected to have
 20 very clear notions of what was proper; but, as Mrs Higgins observed in an undertone to Mrs Parrot when they were coming out of church, "Her husband, who'd been born i' the parish, might ha' told her better." An unreadiness to put on black on all available occasions, or too great an alacrity in putting it off, argued, in Mrs Higgins's opinion, a dangerous levity of character, and an unnatural insensibility to the essential fitness of things.

"Some folks can't a-bear to put off their colours," she remarked; "but that was never the way i' my family."
 30 Why, Mrs Parrot, from the time I was married, till Mr

Higgins died, nine year ago come Candlemas, I niver was out o' black two year together!"

"Ah," said Mrs Parrot, who was conscious of inferiority in this respect, "there isn't many families as have had so many deaths as yours, Mrs Higgins."

Mrs Higgins, who was an elderly widow, "well left," reflected with complacency that Mrs Parrot's observation was no more than just, and that Mrs Jennings very likely belonged to a family which had had no funerals to speak of.

Even dirty Dame Fripp, who was a very rare church-goer, had been to Mrs Hackit to beg a bit of old crape, and with this sign of grief pinned on her little coal-scuttle bonnet, was seen dropping her curtsy opposite the reading-desk. This manifestation of respect towards Mr Gilfil's memory on the part of Dame Fripp had no theological bearing whatever. It was due to an event which had occurred some years back, and which, I am sorry to say, had left that grimy old lady as indifferent to the means of grace as ever. Dame Fripp kept leeches, and was understood to have such remarkable influence over those wilful animals in inducing them to bite under the most unpromising circumstances, that though her own leeches were usually rejected, from a suspicion that they had lost their appetite, she herself was constantly called in to apply the more lively individuals furnished from Mr Pilgrim's surgery, when, as was very often the case, one of that clever man's paying patients was attacked with inflammation. Thus Dame Fripp, in addition to "property" supposed to yield her no less than half-a-crown a-week, was in the receipt of professional fees, the gross amount of which was vaguely estimated by her neighbours as "pouns an' pouns." Moreover, she drove a brisk trade in lollipop with epicurean urchins, who recklessly purchased that luxury at the rate

of two hundred per cent. Nevertheless, with all these notorious sources of income, the shameless old woman constantly pleaded poverty, and begged for scraps at Mrs Hackit's, who, though she always said Mrs Fripp was "as false as two folks," and no better than a miser and a heathen, had yet a leaning towards her as an old neighbour.

"There's that case-hardened old Judy a-coming after the tea-leaves again," Mrs Hackit would say; "an' I'm fool enough to give 'em her, though, Sally waps 'em all the
10 while to sweep the floors with!"

Such was Dame Fripp, whom Mr Gilfil, riding leisurely in top-boots and spurs from doing duty at Knebley one warm Sunday afternoon, observ'd sitting in the dry ditch near her cottage, and by her side a large pig, who, with that ease and confidence belonging to perfect friendship, was lying with his head in her lap, and making no effort to play the agreeable beyond an occasional grunt.

"Why, Mrs Fripp," said the Vicar, "I didn't know you had such a fine pig. You'll have some rare fitches at
20 Christmas!"

"Eh, God forbid! My son gev him me two 'ear ago, an' he's been company to me iver sin'. I couldn't find i' my heart to part wi'm, if I niver knowed the taste o' bacon-fat again."

"Why, he'll eat his head off, and yours too. How can you go on keeping a pig, and making nothing by him?"

"O, he picks a bit hisself wi' rootin', and I dooaht mind doing wi'out to gi' him summat. A bit o' coompany's meat an' drink too, an' he follers me about, and grunts
30 when I spake to'm, just like a Christian."

Mr Gilfil laughed, and I am obliged to admit that he said good-bye to Dame Fripp without asking her why she had not been to thurch, or making the slightest effort for

her spiritual edification. But the next day he ordered his man David to take her a great piece of bacon, with a message, saying, the parson wanted to make sure that Mrs Fripp would know the taste of bacon-fat again. So, when Mr Gilfil died, Dame Fripp manifested her gratitude and reverence in the simple dingy fashion I have mentioned.

You already suspect that the Vicar did not shine in the more spiritual functions of his office; and indeed, the utmost I can say for him in this respect is, that he performed those functions with undeviating attention to brevity and despatch. He had a large heap of short sermons, rather yellow and worn at the edges, from which he took two every Sunday, securing perfect impartiality in the selection by taking them as they came, without reference to topics; and having preached one of these sermons at Shepperton in the morning, he mounted his horse and rode hastily with the other in his pocket to Knebley, where he officiated in a wonderful little church, with a checkered pavement which had once rung to the iron tread of military monks, with coats of arms in clusters on the lofty roof, marble warriors and their wives without noses occupying a large proportion of the area, and the twelve apostles, with their heads very much on one side, holding didactic ribbons, painted in fresco on the walls. Here, in an absence of mind to which he was prone, Mr Gilfil would sometimes forget to take off his spurs before putting on his surplice, and only become aware of the omission by feeling something mysteriously tugging at the skirts of that garment as he stepped into the reading-desk. But the Knebley farmers would as soon have thought of criticising the moon as their pastor. He belonged to the course of nature, like markets and toll-gates and dirty bank-notes; and being a vicar, his claim on their veneration

tion had never been counteracted by an exasperating claim on their pockets.

Thus in Shepperton this breach with Mr Oldinport tended only to heighten that good understanding which the Vicar had always enjoyed with the rest of his parishioners, from the generation whose children he had christened a quarter of a century before, down to that hopeful generation represented by little Tommy Bond, who had recently quitted frocks and trousers for the severe
10 simplicity of a tight suit of corduroys, relieved by numerous brass buttons. Tommy was a saucy boy, impervious to all impressions of reverence, and excessively addicted to humming-tops and marbles, with which recreative resources he was in the habit of immoderately distending the pockets of his corduroys. One day, spinning his top on the garden-walk, and seeing the Vicar advance directly towards it, at that exciting moment when it was beginning to "sleep" magnificently, he shouted out with all the force of his lungs—"Stop! don't knock my top down, now!"
20 From that day "little Corduroys" had been an especial favourite with Mr Gilfil, who delighted to provoke his ready scorn and wonder by putting questions which gave Tommy the meanest opinion of his intellect.

"Well, little Corduroys, have they milked the geese to-day?"

"Milked the geese! why, they don't milk the geese, you silly!"

"No! dear heart! why, how do the goslings live, then?"

The nutriment of goslings rather transcending Tommy's
30 observations in natural history, he feigned to understand this question in an exclamatory rather than an interrogatory sense, and became absorbed in winding up his top.

"Ah, I see you don't know how the goslings live! But did you notice how it rained sugar-plums yesterday?" (Here Tommy became attentive.) "Why, they fell into my pocket as I rode along. You look in my pocket and see if they didn't."

Tommy, without waiting to discuss the alleged antecedent, lost no time in ascertaining the presence of the agreeable consequent, for he had a well-founded belief in the advantages of diving into the Vicar's pocket. Mr Gilfil called it his wonderful pocket, because, as he delighted to tell the "young shavers" and "two-shoes"—so he called all little boys and girls—whenever he put pennies into it, they turned into sugar-plums or gingerbread, or some other nice thing. Indeed, little Bessie Parrot, a flaxen-headed "two-shoes," very white and fat as to her neck, always had the admirable directness and sincerity to salute him with the question—"What zoo dot in zoo pottet?" 10

You can imagine, then, that the christening dinners were none the less merry for the presence of the parson. The farmers relished his society particularly, for he could not only smoke his pipe, and season the details of parish affairs with abundance of caustic jokes and proverbs, but, as Mr Bond often said, no man knew more than the Vicar about the breed of cows and horses. He had grazing-land of his own about five miles off, which a bailiff, ostensibly a tenant, farmed under his direction; and to ride backwards and forwards, and look after the buying and selling of stock, was the old gentleman's chief relaxation, now his hunting-days were over. To hear him discussing the respective merits of the Devonshire breed and the shorthorns, or the last foolish decision of the magistrates about a pauper, a superficial observer might have seen little difference, 20 30

beyond his superior shrewdness, between the Vicar and his bucolic parishioners ; for it was his habit to approximate his accent and mode of speech to theirs, doubtless because he thought it a mere frustration of the purposes of language to talk of "shear-hogs" and "ewes" to men who habitually said "sharrags" and "yowes." Nevertheless the farmers themselves were perfectly aware of the distinction between them and the parson, and had not at all the less belief in him as a gentleman and a clergyman for his easy speech
10 and familiar manners. Mrs Parrot smoothed her apron and set her cap right with the utmost solicitude when she saw the Vicar coming, made him her deepest curtsy, and every Christmas had a fat turkey ready to send him with her "duty." And in the most gossiping colloquies with Mr Gilfil, you might have observed that both men and women "minded their words," and never became indifferent to his approbation.

The same respect attended him in his strictly clerical functions. The benefits of baptism were supposed to be
20 somehow bound up with Mr Gilfil's personality, so metaphysical a distinction as that between a man and his office being, as yet, quite foreign to the mind of a good Shepperton Churchman, savouring, he would have thought, of Dissent on the very face of it. Miss Selina Parrot put off her marriage a whole month when Mr Gilfil had an attack of rheumatism, rather than be married in a makeshift manner by the Milby curate.

"We've had a very good sermon this morning," was the frequent remark, after hearing one of the old yellow series,
30 heard with all the more satisfaction because it had been heard for the twentieth time ; for to minds on the Shepperton level it is repetition, not novelty, that produces the strongest effect ; and phrases, like tunes, are a long time

making themselves at home in the brain.—*Ibid.* "Mr Gilfil's Love-Story," 1857.

c. HETTY SORREL IN THE DAIRY.

The dairy was certainly worth looking at : it was a scene to sicken for with a sort of calenture in hot and dusty streets—such coolness, such purity, such fresh fragrance of new-pressed cheese, of firm butter, of wooden vessels perpetually bathed in pure water ; such soft colouring of red earthenware and creamy surfaces, brown wood and polished tin, grey limestone and rich orange-red rust on the iron weights and hooks and hinges. But one gets only a confused notion of these details when they surround a distractingly pretty girl of seventeen, standing on little pattens and rounding her dimpled arm to lift a pound of butter out of the scale. 10

Hetty blushed a deep rose-colour when Captain Donni-thorne entered the dairy and spoke to her ; but it was not at all a distressed blush, for it was inwreathed with smiles and dimples, and with sparkles from under long, curled, dark eyelashes ; and while her aunt was discoursing to him about the limited amount of milk that was to be spared for butter and cheese so long as the calves were not all weaned, and a large quantity but inferior quality of milk yielded by the shorthorn, which had been bought on experiment, together with other matters which must be interesting to a young gentleman who would one day be a landlord, Hetty tossed and patted her pound of butter with quite a self-possessed, coquettish air, slyly conscious that no turn of her head was lost. Her aunt, Mrs Poyser, who professed to despise all personal attractions, and intended to be the severest of mentors, continually gazed at Hetty's 20 30

charms by the sly, fascinated in spite of herself ; and after administering such a scolding as naturally flowed from her anxiety to do well by her husband's niece—whq had no mother of her own to scold her, poor thing !—she would often confess to her husband, when they were safe out of hearing, that she firmly believed, “ the naughtier the little huzzy behaved, the prettier she looked.”

It is of little use for me to tell you that Hetty's cheek was like a rose-petal, that dimples played about her pouting
10 lips, that her large dark eyes hid a soft roguishness under their long lashes, and that her curly hair, though all pushed back under her round cap while she was at work, stole back in dark delicate rings on her forehead, and about her white shell-like ears ; it is of little use for me to say how lovely was the contour of her pink-and-white neckerchief, tucked into her low plum-coloured stuff bodice, or how the linen butter-making apron, with its bib, seemed a thing to be imitated in silk by duchesses, since it fell in such charming lines, or how her brown stockings and thick-soled
20 buckled shoes lost all that clumsiness which they must certainly have had when empty of her foot and ankle ;—of little use, unless you have seen a woman who affected you as Hetty affected her beholders, for otherwise, though you might conjure up the image of a lovely woman, she would not in the least resemble that distracting kitten-like maiden. I might mention all the divine charms of a bright spring day, but if you had never in your life utterly forgotten yourself in straining your eyes after the mounting lark, or in wandering through the still lanes when the fresh-
30 opened blossoms fill them with a sacred silent beauty like that of fretted aisles, where would be the use of my descriptive catalogue ? I could never make you know what I meant by a bright spring day. Hetty's was a spring-tide

beauty ; it was the beauty of young frisking things, round-limbed, gambolling, circumventing you by a false air of innocence—the innocence of a young star-browed calf, for example, that, being inclined for a promenade out of bounds, leads you a severe steeple-chase over hedge and ditch, and only comes to a stand in the middle of a bog.

And they are the prettiest attitudes and movements into which a pretty girl is thrown in making up butter—tossing movements that give a charming curve to the arm, and a sideward inclination of the round white neck ; little patting and rolling movements with the palm of the hand, and nice adaptations and finishings which cannot at all be effected without a great play of the pouting mouth and the dark eyes. And then the butter itself seems to communicate a fresh charm—it is so pure, so sweet-scented ; it is turned off the mould with such a beautiful firm surface, like marble in a pale yellow light ! Moreover, Hetty was particularly clever at making up the butter : it was the one performance of hers that her aunt allowed to pass without severe criticism ; so she handled it with all the grace that belongs to mastery.—*Adam Bede.* 10 20

d. DINAH MORRIS AT THE PREACHING.

“An’ there’s the pretty preacher-woman ! My eye, she’s got her bonnet off. I mun go a bit nearer.”

Several of the men followed Ben’s lead, and the traveller pushed his horse on to the Green, as Dinah walked rather quickly, and in advance of her companions, towards the cart under the maple-tree. While she was near Seth’s tall figure, she looked short, but when she had mounted the cart, and was away from all comparison, she seemed above the middle height of woman, though in reality she 30

did not exceed it—an effect which was due to the slimness of her figure, and the simple line of her black stuff dress. The stranger was struck with surprise as he saw her approach and mount the cart—surprise, not so much at the feminine delicacy of her appearance, as at the total absence of self-consciousness in her demeanour. He had made up his mind to see her advance with a measured step, and a demure solemnity of countenance ; he had felt sure that her face would be mantled with the smile of conscious saintship, or else charged with denunciatory bitterness. He knew but two types of Methodist—the ecstatic and the bilious. But Dinah walked as simply as if she were going to market, and seemed as unconscious of her outward appearance as a little boy : there was no blush, no tremulousness, which said, “ I know you think me a pretty woman, too young to preach ” ; no casting up or down of the eyelids, no compression of the lips, no attitude of the arms, that said, “ But you must think of me as a saint.” She held no book in her ungloved hands, but let them hang down lightly crossed before her, as she stood and turned her grey eyes on the people. There was no keenness in the eyes ; they seemed rather to be shedding love than making observations ; they had the liquid look which tells that the mind is full of what it has to give out, rather than impressed by external objects. She stood with her left hand towards the descending sun, and leafy boughs screened her from its rays ; but in this sober light the delicate colouring of her face seemed to gather a calm vividness, like flowers at evening. It was a small oval face, of a uniform transparent whiteness, with an egg-like line of cheek and chin, a full but firm mouth, a delicate nostril, and a low perpendicular brow, surmounted by a rising arch of parting between smooth locks of pale reddish

hair. The hair was drawn straight back behind the ears, and covered, except for an inch or two, above the brow, by a net Quaker cap. The eyebrows, of the same colour as the hair, were perfectly horizontal and firmly pencilled; the eyelashes, though no darker, were long and abundant: nothing was left blurred, or unfinished. It was one of those faces that make one think of white flowers with light touches of colour on their pure petals. The eyes had no peculiar beauty, beyond that of expression; they looked so simple, so candid, so gravely loving, that no accusing scowl, no light sneer, could help melting away before their glance.—*Ibid.* 10

ADAM BEDE.

The afternoon sun was warm on the five workmen there, busy upon doors and window-frames and wainscoting. A scent of pine-wood from a tent-like pile of planks outside the open door mingled itself with the scent of the elder-bushes which were spreading their summer snow close to the open window opposite; the slanting sunbeams shone through the transparent shavings that flew before the steady plane, and lit up the fine grain of the oak panelling which stood propped against the wall. On a heap of those soft shavings a rough grey shepherd-dog had made himself a pleasant bed, and was lying with his nose between his fore-paws, occasionally wrinkling his brows to cast a glance at the tallest of the five workmen, who was carving a shield in the centre of a wooden mantelpiece. It was to this workman that the strong barytone belonged which was heard above the sound of plane and hammer singing— 20

“Awake, my soul, and with the sun
Thy daily stage of duty run;
Shake off dull sloth . . .”

Here some measurement was to be taken which required more concentrated attention, and the sonorous voice subsided into a low whistle; but it presently broke out again with renewed vigour—

“Let all thy converse be sincere,
Thy conscience as the noonday clear.”

Such a voice could only come from a broad chest, and the broad chest belonged to a large-boned muscular man nearly six feet high, with a back so flat and a head so
10 well poised that when he drew himself up to take a more distant survey of his work, he had the air of a soldier standing at ease. The sleeve rolled up above the elbow showed an arm that was likely to win the prize for feats of strength; yet the long supple hand, with its broad finger-tips, looked ready for works of skill. In his tall stalwartness Adam Bede was a Saxon, and justified his
20 name; but the jet-black hair, made the more noticeable by its contrast with the light paper cap, and the keen glance of the dark eyes that shone from under strongly marked, prominent, and mobile eyebrows, indicated a mixture of Celtic blood. The face was large and roughly hewn, and when in repose had no other beauty than such as belongs to an expression of good-humoured honest intelligence.

Look at Adam through the rest of the day, as he stands on the scaffolding with the two-feet ruler in his hand, whistling low while he considers how a difficulty about a floor-joist or a window-frame is to be overcome; or as he
30 pushes one of the younger workmen aside, and takes his place in upheaving a weight of timber, saying, “Let alone, lad! thee’st got too much gristle i’ thy bones yet”; or as

he fixes his keen black eyes on the motions of a workman on the other side of the room, and warns him that his distances are not right. Look at this broad-shouldered man with the bare muscular arms, and the thick firm black hair tossed about like trodden meadow-grass whenever he takes off his paper cap, and with the strong barytone voice bursting every now and then into loud and solemn psalm-tunes, as if seeking an outlet for superfluous strength, yet presently checking himself, apparently crossed by some thought which jars with the singing. Perhaps, if you had not been already in the secret, you might not have guessed what sad memories, what warm affection, what tender fluttering hopes, had their home in this athletic body with the broken fingernails—in this rough man, who knew no better lyrics than he could find in the Old and New Version and an occasional hymn; who knew the smallest possible amount of profane history; and for whom the motion and shape of the earth, the course of the sun, and the changes of the seasons, lay in the region of mystery just made visible by fragmentary knowledge. It had cost Adam a great deal of trouble, and work in over-hours, to know what he knew over and above the secrets of his handicraft, and that acquaintance with mechanics and figures, and the nature of the materials he worked with, which was made easy to him by inborn inherited faculty—to get the mastery of his pen, and write a plain hand, to spell without any other mistakes than must in fairness be attributed to the unreasonable character of orthography rather than to any deficiency in the speller, and, moreover, to learn his musical notes and part-singing. Besides all this, he had read his Bible, including the apocryphal books; ‘Poor Richard’s Almanac,’ Taylor’s ‘Holy Living and Dying,’ ‘The Pilgrim’s Progress,’ with Bunyan’s Life and ‘Holy War,’ a great deal of Bailey’s

Dictionary, 'Valentine and Orson,' and part of a 'History of Babylon' which Bartle Massey had lent him. He might have had many more books from Bartle Massey, but he had no time for reading "the commin print," as Lisbeth called it, so busy as he was with figures in all the leisure moments which he did not fill up with extra carpentry.

Adam, you perceive, was by no means a marvellous man, nor, properly speaking, a genius, yet I will not pretend that his was an ordinary character among workmen; and it
 10 would not be at all a safe conclusion that the next best man you may happen to see with a basket of tools over his shoulder and a paper cap on his head has the strong conscience and the strong sense, the blended susceptibility and self-command, of our friend Adam. He was not an average man. Yet such men as he are reared here and there in every generation of our peasant artisans—with an inheritance of affections nurtured by a simple family life of common need and common industry, and an inheritance of faculties trained in skilful courageous labour: they make
 20 their way upward, rarely as geniuses, most commonly as painstaking honest men, with the skill and conscience to do well the tasks that lie before them. Their lives have no discernible echo beyond the neighbourhood where they dwelt, but you are almost sure to find there some good piece of road, some building, some application of mineral produce, some improvement in farming practice, some reform of parish abuses, with which their names are associated by one or two generations after them. Their employers were the richer for them, the work of their hands has worn
 30 well, and the work of their brains has guided well the hands of other men. They went about in their youth in flannel or paper caps, in coats black with coal-dust or streaked with lime and red paint; in old age their white

hairs are seen in a place of honour at church and at market, and they tell their well-dressed sons and daughters, seated round the bright hearth on winter evenings, how pleased they were when they first earned their twopence a-day. Others there are who die poor, and never put off the workman's coat on week-days: they have not had the art of getting rich; but they are men of trust, and when they die before the work is all out of them, it is as if some main screw had got loose in a machine; the master who employed them says, "Where shall I find their like?"—*Ibid.* 10

f. PRISCILLA AND NANCY LAMMETER.

Some women, I grant, would not appear to advantage seated on a pillion, and attired in a drab joseph and a drab beaver-bonnet, with a crown resembling a small stew-pan; for a garment suggesting a coachman's greatcoat, cut out under an exiguity of cloth that would only allow of miniature capes, is not well adapted to conceal deficiencies of contour, nor is drab a colour that will throw salloy cheeks into lively contrast. It was all the greater triumph to Miss Nancy Lammeter's beauty that she looked thoroughly bewitching in that costume, as, seated on the pillion behind her tall, erect father, she held one arm round him, and looked down, with open-eyed anxiety, at the treacherous snow-covered pools and puddles, which sent up formidable splashings of mud under the stamp of Dobbin's foot. A painter would, perhaps, have preferred her in those moments when she was free from self-consciousness; but certainly the bloom on her cheeks was at its highest point of contrast with the surrounding drab when she arrived at the door of the Red House, and saw Mr Godfrey Cass ready to lift her from the pillion. She wished her sister Priscilla 30

had come up at the same time behind the servant, for then she would have contrived that Mr Godfrey should have lifted off Priscilla first, and, in the mean time, she would have persuaded her father to go round to the horse-block instead of alighting at the door-steps. It was very painful, when you had made it quite clear to a young man that you were determined not to marry him, however much he might wish it, that he would still continue to pay you marked attentions: besides, why didn't he always show the same
10 attentions, if he meant them sincerely, instead of being so strange as Mr Godfrey Cass was, sometimes behaving as if he didn't want to speak to her, and taking no notice of her for weeks and weeks, and then, all on a sudden, almost making love again? Moreover, it was quite plain he had no real love for her, else he would not let people have *that* to say of him which they did say. Did he suppose that Miss Nancy Lammeter was to be won by any man, squire or no squire, who led a bad life? That was not what she had been used to see in her own father, who was the sober-
20 est and best man in that country-side, only a little hot and hasty now and then, if things were not done to the minute.

All these thoughts rushed through Miss Nancy's mind, in their habitual succession, in the moments between her first sight of Mr Godfrey Cass standing at the door and her own arrival there. Happily, the Squire came out too and gave a loud greeting to her father, so that, somehow, under cover of this noise she seemed to find concealment for her confusion and neglect of any suitably formal behaviour, while she was being lifted from the pillion by strong arms
30 which seemed to find her ridiculously small and light. And there was the best reason for hastening into the house at once, since the snow was beginning to fall again, threatening an unpleasant journey for such guests as were still

on the road. These were a small minority; for already the afternoon was beginning to decline, and there would not be too much time for the ladies who came from a distance to attire themselves in readiness for the early tea which was to inspirit them for the dance.

There was a buzz of voices through the house as Miss Nancy entered, mingled with the scrape of a fiddle preluding in the kitchen; but the Lammeters were guests whose arrival had evidently been thought of so much that it had been watched for from the windows, for Mrs Kimble, 10 who did the honours at the Red House on these great occasions, came forward to meet Miss Nancy in the hall, and conduct her upstairs. Mrs Kimble was the Squire's sister as well as the doctor's wife—a double dignity, with which her diameter was in direct proportion; so that, a journey upstairs being rather fatiguing to her, she did not oppose Miss Nancy's request to be allowed to find her way alone to the Blue Room, where the Miss Lammeters' band- 20 boxes had been deposited on their arrival in the morning.

There was hardly a bedroom in the house where feminine 20 compliments were not passing and feminine toilettes going forward, in various stages, in space made scanty by extra beds spread upon the floor; and Miss Nancy, as she entered the Blue Room, had to make her little formal curtsy to a group of six. On the one hand, there were ladies no less important than the two Miss Gunns, the wine merchant's daughters from Lytherly, dressed in the height of fashion, with the tightest skirts and the shortest waists, and gazed at by Miss Ladbroke (of the Old Pas- 30 tures) with a shyness not unsustained by inward criticism. Partly, Miss Ladbroke felt that her own skirt must be regarded as unduly lax by the Miss Gunns, and partly, that it was a pity the Miss Gunns did not show that judg-

ment which she herself would show if she were in their place, by stopping a little on this side of the fashion. On the other hand, Mrs Ladbroke was standing in¹ skullcap and front, with her turban in her hand, curtsying and smiling blandly and saying, "After you, ma'am," to another lady in similar circumstances, who had politely offered the precedence at the looking-glass.

But Miss Nancy had no sooner made her curtsy than an elderly lady came forward, whose² full white muslin kerchief, and mob-cap round her curls of smooth grey hair, were in
10 daring contrast with the puffed yellow satins and top-knotted caps of her neighbours. She approached Miss Nancy with much primness, and said, with a slow, treble suavity—

"Niece, I hope I see you well in health." Miss Nancy kissed her aunt's cheek dutifully, and answered, with the same sort of amiable primness, "Quite well, I thank you, aunt; and I hope I see you the same."

"Thank you, niece; I keep my health for the present. And how is my brother-in-law?"

20 These dutiful questions and answers were continued until it was ascertained in detail that the Lammeters were all as well as usual, and the Osgoods likewise, also that niece Priscilla must certainly arrive shortly, and that travelling on pillions in snowy weather was unpleasant, though a joseph was a great protection. Then Nancy was formally introduced to her aunt's visitors, the Miss Gunns, as being the daughters of a mother known to *their* mother, though
30 now for the first time induced to make a journey into these parts; and these ladies were so taken by surprise at finding such a lovely face and figure in an out-of-the-way country place, that they began to feel some curiosity about the dress she would put on when she took off her joseph. Miss Nancy, whose thoughts were always conducted with

the propriety and moderation conspicuous in her manners, remarked to herself that the Miss Gunns were rather hard-featured than otherwise, and that such very low dresses as they wore might have been attributed to vanity if their shoulders had been pretty, but that, being as they were, it was not reasonable to suppose that they showed their necks from a love of display, but rather from some obligation not inconsistent with sense and modesty. She felt convinced, as she opened her box, that this must be her aunt Osgood's opinion, for Miss Nancy's mind resembled 10 her aunt's to a degree that everybody said was surprising, considering the kinship was on Mr Osgood's side; and though you might not have supposed it from the formality of their greeting, there was a devoted attachment and mutual admiration between aunt and niece. Even Miss Nancy's refusal of her cousin Gilbert Osgood (on the ground solely that he was her cousin), though it had grieved her aunt greatly, had not in the least cooled the preference which had determined her to leave Nancy several of her hereditary ornaments, let Gilbert's future wife be 20 whom she might.

Three of the ladies quickly retired, but the Miss Gunns were quite content that Mrs Osgood's inclination to remain with her niece gave them also a reason for staying to see the rustic beauty's toilette. And it was really a pleasure—from the first opening of the bandbox, where everything smelt of lavender and rose-leaves, to the clasping of the small coral necklace that fitted closely round her little white neck. Everything belonging to Miss Nancy was of delicate purity and natty-ness: not a crease was where it 30 had no business to be, not a bit of her linen professed whiteness without fulfilling its profession; the very pins on her pincushion were stuck in after a pattern from which she

was careful to allow no aberration; and as for her own person, it gave the same idea of perfect unvarying neatness as the body of a little bird. It is true that her light-brown hair was cropped behind like a boy's, and was dressed in front in a number of flat rings, that lay quite away from her face; but there was no sort of coiffure that could make Miss Nancy's cheek and neck look otherwise than pretty; and when at last she stood complete in her silvery twilled silk, her lace tucker, her coral necklace, and coral ear-drops, 10 the Miss Gunns could see nothing to criticise except her hands, which bore the traces of butter-making, cheese-crushing, and even still coarser work. But Miss Nancy was not ashamed of that, for while she was dressing she narrated to her aunt how she and Priscilla had packed their boxes yesterday, because this morning was baking morning, and since they were leaving home, it was desirable to make a good supply of meat-pies for the kitchen; and as she concluded this judicious remark, she turned to the Miss Gunns that she might not commit the rudeness of not 20 including them in the conversation. The Miss Gunns smiled stiffly, and thought what a pity it was that these rich country people, who could afford to buy such good clothes (really Miss Nancy's lace and silk were very costly), should be brought up in utter ignorance and vulgarity. She actually said "mate" for "meat," "'appen" for "perhaps," and "oss" for "horse," which, to young ladies living in good Lytherly society, who habitually said 'orse, even in domestic privacy, and only said 'appen on the right occasions, was necessarily shocking. Miss Nancy, indeed, had 30 never been to any school higher than Dame Tedman's; her acquaintance with profane literature hardly went beyond the rhymes she had worked in her large sampler under the lamb and the shepherdess; and in order to balance an

account, she was obliged to effect her subtraction by removing visible metallic shillings and sixpences from a visible metallic total. There is hardly a servant-maid in these days who is not better informed than Miss Nancy; yet she had the essential attributes of a lady—high veracity, delicate honour in her dealings, deference to others, and refined personal habits,—and lest these should not suffice to convince grammatical fair ones that her feelings can at all resemble theirs, I will add that she was slightly proud and exacting, and as constant in her affection towards a baseless opinion as towards an erring lover. 10

The anxiety about sister Priscilla, which had grown rather active by the time the coral necklace was clasped, was happily ended by the entrance of that cheerful-looking lady herself, with a face made blowsy by cold and damp. After the first questions and greetings, she turned to Nancy, and surveyed her from head to foot—then wheeled her round, to ascertain that the back view was equally faultless.

“What do you think o’ *these* gowns, aunt Osgood?” said Priscilla, while Nancy helped her to unrobe. 20

“Very handsome indeed, niece,” said Mrs Osgood, with a slight increase of formality. She always thought niece Priscilla too rough.

“I am obliged to have the same as Nancy, you know, for all I’m five years older, and it makes me look yallow; for she never *will* have anything without I have mine just like it, because she wants us to look like sisters. And I tell her, folks ’ull think it’s my weakness makes me fancy as I shall look pretty in what she looks pretty in. For I *am* ugly—there’s no denying that: I feature my father’s family. But, law! I don’t mind, do you?” Priscilla here 30
turned to the Miss Gunns, rattling on in too much pre-occupation with the delight of talking, to notice that her

candour was not appreciated. "The pretty uns do for fly-catchers—they keep the men off us. I've no opinion o' the men, Miss Gunn—I don't know what *you* have. And as for fretting and stewing about what *they*'ll think of you from morning till night, and making your life uneasy about what they're doing when they're out o' your sight—as I tell Nancy, it's a folly no woman need be guilty of, if she's got a good father and a good home: let her leave it to them as have got no fortin, and can't help themselves. As

10 I say, Mr Have-your-own-way is the best husband, and the only one I'd ever promise to obey. I know it isn't pleasant, when you've been used to living in a big way, and managing hogsheads and all that, to go and put your nose in by somebody else's fireside, or to sit down by yourself to a scrag or a knuckle; but, thank God! my father's a sober man and likely to live; and if you've got a man by the chimney-corner, it doesn't matter if he's childish—the business needn't be broke up."

The delicate process of getting her narrow gown over

20 her head without injury to her smooth curls obliged Miss Priscilla to pause in this rapid survey of life, and Mrs Osgood seized the opportunity of rising and saying—

"Well, niece, you'll follow us. The Miss Gunns will like to go down."

"Sister," said Nancy, when they were alone, "you've offended the Miss Gunns, I'm sure."

"What have I done, child?" said Priscilla, in some alarm.

"Why, you asked them if they minded about being ugly

30 —you're so very blunt."

"Law, did I? Well, it popped out: it's a mercy I said no more, for I'm a bad un to live with folks when they don't like the truth. But as for being ugly, look at me,

child, in this silver-coloured silk—I told you how it 'ud be—I look as yallow as a daffadil. Anybody 'ud say you wanted to make a mawkin of me."

"No, Priscy, don't say so. I begged and prayed of you not to let us have this silk if you'd like another better. I was willing to have *your* choice, you know I was," said Nancy, in anxious self-vindication.

"Nonsense, child, you know you'd set your heart on this; and reason good, for you're the colour o' cream. It 'ud be fine doings for you to dress yourself to suit *my* skin. 10 What I find fault with is that notion o' yours as I must dress myself just like you. But you do as you like with me—you always did, from when first you begun to walk. If you wanted to go the field's length, the field's length you'd go; and there was no whipping you, for you looked as prim and innicent as a daisy all the while."

"Priscy," said Nancy, gently, as she fastened a coral necklace, exactly like her own, round Priscilla's neck, which was very far from being like her own, "I'm sure I'm willing to give way as far as is right, but who shouldn't 20 dress alike if it isn't sisters? Would you have us go about looking as if we were no kin to one another—us that have got no mother and not another sister in the world? I'd do what was right, if I dressed in a gown dyed with cheese-colouring; and I'd rather you'd choose, and let me wear what pleases you."

"There you go again! You'd come round to the same thing if one talked to you from Saturday night till Saturday morning. It'll be fine fun to see how you'll master your husband and 'never raise your voice above the singing o' 30 the kettle all the while. I like to see the men mastered!"

• "Don't talk so, Priscy," said Nancy, blushing. "You know I don't mean ever to be married."

"Oh, you never mean a fiddlestick's end!" said Priscilla, as she arranged her discarded dress, and closed her band-box. "Who shall *I* have to work for when father's gone, if you are to go and take notions in your head and be an old maid, because some folks are no better than they should be? I haven't a bit o' patience with you—sitting on an addled egg for ever, as if there was never a fresh un in the world. One old maid's enough out o' two sisters; and I shall do credit to 'ta single life, for God A'mighty meant me for it. Come, we can go down now. I'm as ready as a mawkin *can* be—there's nothing awanting to frighten the crows, now I've got my ear-droppers in."

As the two Miss Lammeters walked into the large parlour together, any one who did not know the character of both might certainly have supposed that the reason why the square-shouldered, clumsy, high-featured Priscilla wore a dress the facsimile of her pretty sister's was either the mistaken vanity of the one or the malicious contrivance of the other in order to set off her own rare beauty. But 20 the good-natured self-forgetful cheeriness and common-sense of Priscilla would soon have dissipated the one suspicion; and the modest calm of Nancy's speech and manners told clearly of a mind free from all disavowed devices.—*Silas Marner.*

V. SKETCHES OF CHARACTER.

a. AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

THE next day, Friday, at five o'clock by the sun-dial, the large box-window of Mrs. Jerome's parlour was open ; and that lady herself was seated within its ample semicircle, having a table before her on which her best tea-tray, her best china, and her best urn-rug had already been standing in readiness for half an hour. Mrs Jerome's best tea-service was of delicate white fluted china, with gold sprigs upon it—as pretty a tea-service as you need wish to see, and quite good enough for chimney ornaments ; indeed, as the cups were without handles, most visitors who had 10 the distinction of taking tea out of them wished that such charming china had already been promoted to that honorary position. Mrs Jerome was like her china, handsome and old-fashioned. She was a buxom lady of sixty, in an elaborate lace cap fastened by a frill under her chin, a dark, well-curved front concealing her forehead, a snowy neckerchief exhibiting its ample folds as far as her waist, and a stiff grey silk gown. She had a clean damask napkin pinned before her to guard her dress during the process of tea-making ; her favourite geraniums in the 20 bow-window were looking as healthy as she could desire ; her own handsome portrait, painted when she was twenty

years younger, was smiling down on her with agreeable flattery; and altogether she seemed to be in as peaceful and pleasant a position as a buxom, well-drest elderly lady need desire. But, as in so many other cases, appearances were deceptive. Her mind was greatly perturbed and her temper ruffled by the fact that it was more than a quarter past five even by the losing timepiece, that it was half-past by her large gold watch, which she held in her hand as if she were counting the pulse of the afternoon, and that,
10 by the kitchen clock, which she felt sure was not an hour too fast, it had already struck six. The lapse of time was rendered the more unendurable to Mrs Jerome by her wonder that Mr Jerome could stay out in the garden with Lizzie in that thoughtless way, taking it so easily that tea-time was long past, and that, after all the trouble of getting down the best tea-things, Mr Tryan would not come. . . . So she rang the bell for Sally.

“Goodness me, Sally! go into the garden an’ see after your master. Tell him it’s goin’ on for six, an’ Mr Tryan
20 ’ull niver think o’ comin’ now, an’ it’s time we got tea over. An’ he’s lettin’ Lizzie stain her frock, I expect, among them strawberry beds. Make her come in this minute.”

No wonder Mr Jerome was tempted to linger in the garden, for though the house was pretty and well deserved its name, “the White House,” the tall damask roses that clustered over the porch being thrown into relief by rough stucco of the most brilliant white, yet the garden and orchards were Mr Jerome’s glory, as well they might be; and there was nothing in which he had a more innocent pride
30 —peace to a good man’s memory! all his pride was innocent—than in conducting a hitherto uninitiated visitor over his grounds, and making him in some degree aware of the incomparable advantages possessed by the inhabitants of

the White House in the matter of red-streaked apples, russets, northern greens (excellent for baking), swan-egg pears, and early vegetables, to say nothing of flowering "shrubs," pink hawthorns, lavender bushes more than ever Mrs Jerome could use, and, in short, a superabundance of everything that a person retired from business could desire to possess himself or to share with his friends. The garden was one of those old-fashioned paradises which hardly exist any longer except as memories of our childhood: no finical separation between flower- and kitchen-garden there; no monotony of enjoyment for one sense to the exclusion of another; but a charming paradisiacal mingling of all that was pleasant to the eyes and good for food. The rich flower-border running along every walk, with its endless succession of spring flowers, anemones, auriculas, wallflowers, sweet-williams, campanulas, snapdragons, and tiger-lilies, had its taller beauties, such as moss and Provence roses, varied with espalier apple-trees; the crimson of a carnation was carried out in the lurking crimson of the neighbouring strawberry-beds; you gathered a moss-rose one moment and a bunch of currants the next; you were in a delicious fluctuation between the scent of jasmine and the juice of gooseberries. Then what a high wall at one end, flanked by a summer-house so lofty, that after ascending its long flight of steps you could see perfectly well there was no view worth looking at; what alcoves and garden-seats in all directions; and along one side what a hedge, tall, and firm, and unbroken, like a green wall!

It was near this hedge that Mr Jerome was standing when Sally found him. He had set down the basket of strawberries on the gravel, and had lifted up little Lizzie

in his arms to look at a bird's nest. Lizzie peeped, and then looked at her grandpa with round blue eyes, and then peeped again.

"D'ye see it, Lizzie?" he whispered.

"Yes," she whispered in return, putting her lips very near grandpa's face. At this moment Sally appeared.

"Eh, eh, Sally, what's the matter? Is Mr Tryan come?"

"No, sir, an' Missis says she's sure he won't come now, 10 an' she wants you to come in an' hev tea. Dear heart, Miss Lizzie, you've stained your pinafore, an' I shouldn't wonder if it's gone through to your frock. There'll be fine work! Come along wi' me, do."

"Nay, nay, nay, we've done no harm, we've done no harm, hev we, Lizzie? The wash-tub 'll make all right again."

Sally, regarding the wash-tub from a different point of view, looked sourly serious, and hurried away with Lizzie, who trotted submissively along, her little head in eclipse 20 under a large nankin bonnet, while Mr Jerome followed leisurely with his full broad shoulders in rather a stooping posture, and his large good-natured features and white locks shaded by a broad-brimmed hat.

"Mr Jerome, I wonder at you," said Mrs Jerome, in a tone of indignant remonstrance, evidently sustained by a deep sense of injury, as her husband opened the parlour door. "When will you leave off invitin' people to meals an' not lettin' 'em know the time? I'll answer for't, you niver said a word to Mr Tryan as we should take tea 30 at five o'clock. It's just like you!"

"Nay, nay, Susan," answered the husband in a soothing tone, "there's nothin' amiss. I told Mr Tryan as we took tea at five punctial; mayhap' summat's a de-

tainin' on him. He's a deal to do, an' to think on, remember."

"Why, it's struck six i' the kitchen a'ready. It's nonsense to look for him comin' now. So you may's well ring for th' urn. Now Sally's got th' heater in the fire, we may's well hev th' urn in, though he doesn't come. I niver see'd the like o' you, Mr Jerome, for axin' people an' givin' me the trouble o' gettin' things down an' hevin' crumpets made, an' after all they don't come. I shall hev to wash every one o' these tea-things myself, for there's 10 no trustin' Sally—she'd break a fortin i' crockery i' no time!"

"But why will you give yourself sich trouble, Susan? Our everyday tea-things would ha' done as well for Mr Tryan, an' they're a deal convenenter to hold."

"Yes, that's just your way, Mr Jerome, you're al'ys a-findin' faut wi' my chany, because I bought it myself afore I was married. But let me tell you, I knowed how to choose chany if I didn't know how to choose a husband. An' where's Lizzie? You've niver left her i' the garden 20 by herself, with her white frock on an' clean stockins?"

"Be easy, my dear Susan, be easy; Lizzie's come in wi' Sally. She's hevin' her pinafore took off, I'll be bound. Ah! there's Mr Tryan a-comin' through the gate."

Mrs Jerome began hastily to adjust her damask napkin and the expression of her countenance for the reception of the clergyman, and Mr Jerome went out to meet his guest, whom he greeted outside the door.

"Mr Tryan, how do you do, Mr Tryan? Welcome to the White House! I'm glad to see you, sir—I'm glad to 30 see you."

If you had heard the tone of mingled good-will, veneration, and condolence in which this greeting was uttered,

even without seeing the face that completely harmonised with it, you would have no difficulty in inferring the ground-notes of Mr Jerome’s character. To a fine ear[•] that tone said as plainly as possible—“Whatever recommends itself to me, Thomas Jerome, as piety and goodness, shall have my love and honour. Ah, friends, this pleasant world is a sad one, too, ‘isn’t it? Let us help one another, let us help one another.” . . .

Mr Tryan had not hitherto been to the White House, but
 10 yesterday, meeting Mr Jerome in the street, he had at once accepted the invitation to tea, saying there was something he wished to talk about. He appeared worn and fatigued now, and after shaking hands with Mrs Jerome, threw himself into a chair and looked out on the pretty garden with an air of relief.

“What a nice place you have here, Mr Jerome! I’ve not seen anything so quiet and pretty since I came to Milby. On Paddiford Common, where I live, you know, the bushes are all sprinkled with soot, and there’s never
 20 any quiet except in the dead of night.”

“Dear heart! dear heart! That’s very bad—and for you, too, as hev to study. Wouldn’t it be better for you to be somewhere more out i’ the country like?”

“O no! I should lose so much time in going to and fro, and besides I like to be *among* the people. I’ve no face to go and preach resignation to those poor things in their smoky air and comfortless homes, when I come straight from every luxury myself. There are many things quite lawful for other men, which a clergyman must forego
 30 if he would do any good in a manufacturing population, like this.”

Here the preparations for tea were crowned by the simultaneous appearance of Lizzie and the crumpet. It

is a pretty surprise, when one visits an elderly couple, to see a little figure enter in a white frock with a blond head as smooth as satin, round blue eyes, and a cheek like an apple blossom. A toddling little girl is a centre of common feeling, which makes the most dissimilar people understand each other; and Mr Tryan looked at Lizzie with that quiet pleasure which is always genuine.

"Here we are, here we are!" said proud grandpapa. "You didn't think we'd got such a little gell as this, did you, Mr Tryan? Why, it seems but th' other day since 10 her mother was just such another. This is our little Lizzie, this is. Come an' shake hands wi' Mr Tryan, Lizzie; come."

Lizzie advanced without hesitation, and put out one hand, while she fingered her coral necklace with the other, and looked up into Mr Tryan's face with a reconnoitring gaze. He stroked the satin head, and said in his gentlest voice, "How do you do, Lizzie? will you give me a kiss?" She put up her little bud of a mouth, and then retreating a little and glancing down at her frock, said— 20

"Dit id my noo fock. I put it on 'toid you wad toming. Tally taid you wouldn't 'ook at it."

"Hush, hush, Lizzie, little gells must be seen and not heard," said Mrs Jerome; while grandpapa, winking significantly, and looking radiant with delight at Lizzie's extraordinary promise of cleverness, set her up on her high cane-chair by the side of grandma, who lost no time in shielding the beauties of the new frock with a napkin. . . .

Tea being over, Mr Tryan proposed a walk in the garden. Little Lizzie's appeal, "Me go, gandpa!" could 30 not be rejected, so she was duly bonneted and pinafores, and then they turned out into the evening sunshine. Not Mrs Jerome, however; she had a deeply-meditated

plan of retiring *ad interim* to the kitchen and washing up the best tea-things, as a mode of getting forward with the sadly-retarded business of the day.

"This way, Mr Tryan, this way," said the old gentleman; "I must take you to my pastur fust, an' show you our cow—the best milker i' the county. An' see here at these back-buildins, how convenient the dairy is; I planned it ivery bit myself. An' here I've got my little carpenter's shop an' my blacksmith's shop; I do no end o' jobs here
10 myself. I niver could bear to be idle, Mr Tryan; I must al'ys be at somethin' or other. It was time for me to lay by business an' mek room for younger folks. I'd got money enough, wi' only one daughter to leave it to, an' I says to myself, says I, it's time to leave off moitherin' myself wi' this world so much, an' give more time to thinkin' of another. But there's a many hours atween getting up an' lyin' down, an' thoughts are no cumber; you can move about wi' a good many on 'em in your head. See, here's the pastur."

20 A very pretty pasture it was, where the large-spotted short-horned cow quietly chewed the cud as she lay and looked sleepily at her admirers—a daintily-trimmed hedge all round, dotted here and there with a mountain-ash or a cherry-tree.

"I've a good bit more land besides this, worth your while to look at, but mayhap it's further nor you'd like to walk now. Bless you! I've welly an' acre o' potato-ground yonders; I've a good big family to supply, you know." (Here Mr Jerome winked and smiled significantly.)

30 "An' that puts me i' mind, Mr Tryan, o' summat I wanted to say to you. Clergymen like you, I know, see a deal more poverty an' that, than other folks, an' hev a many clzims on 'em more nor they can well meet; an' if you'll

mek use o' my purse any time, or let me know where I can be o' any help, I'll tek it very kind on you."

"Thank you, Mr Jerome, I will do so, I promise you. I saw a sad case yesterday; a collier—a fine broad-chested fellow about thirty—was killed by the falling of a wall in the Paddiford colliery. I was in one of the cottages near, when they brought him home on a door, and the shriek of the wife has been ringing in my ears ever since. There are three little children. Happily the woman has her loom, so she will be able to keep out of the workhouse; 10 but she looks very delicate."

"Give me her name, Mr Tryan," said Mr Jerome, drawing out his pocket-book. "I'll call an' see her."

Deep was the fountain of pity in the good old man's heart! He often ate his dinner stintingly, oppressed by the thought that there were men, women, and children with no dinner to sit down to, and would relieve his mind by going out in the afternoon to look for some need that he could supply, some honest struggle in which he could lend a helping hand. That any living being should want, 20 was his chief sorrow; that any rational being should waste, was the next. Sally, indeed, having been scolded by master for a too lavish use of sticks in lighting the kitchen fire, and various instances of recklessness with regard to candle-ends, considered him "as mean as acnythink"; but he had as kindly a warmth as the morning sunlight, and, like the sunlight, his goodness shone on all that came in his way, from the saucy rosy-cheeked lad whom he delighted to make happy with a Christmas box, to the pallid sufferers up dim entries, languishing under the tardy 30 death of want and misery.

It was very pleasant to Mr Tryan to listen to the simple chat of the old man—to walk in the shade of the incom-

parable orchard, and hear the story of the crops yielded by the red-streaked apple-tree, and the quite embarrassing plentifulness of the summer pears—to drink in the sweet evening breath of the garden, as they sat in the alcove—and so, for a short interval, to feel the strain of his pastoral task relaxed.—*Scenes of Clerical Life*. “Janet’s Repentance,” 1857.

b. THE NIGHT-SCHOOL.

Bartle Massey’s was one of a few scattered houses on the edge of a common, which was divided by the road to
 10 Treddleston. Adam reached it in a quarter of an hour after leaving the Hall Farm; and when he had his hand on the door-latch he could see, through the curtainless window, that there were eight or nine heads bending over the desks, lighted by thin dips.

When he entered, a reading lesson was going forward, and Bartle Massey merely nodded, leaving him to take his place where he pleased. . . . It was a sort of scene which Adam had beheld almost weekly for years; he knew by heart every arabesque flourish in the framed
 20 specimen of Bartle Massey’s handwriting which hung over the schoolmaster’s head, by way of keeping a lofty ideal before the minds of his pupils; he knew the backs of all the books on the shelf running along the whitewashed wall above the pegs for the slates; he knew exactly how many grains were gone out of the ear of Indian-corn that hung from one of the rafters; he had long ago exhausted the resources of his imagination in trying to think how the bunch of leathery sea-weed had looked and grown in its
 30 native element; and from the place where he sat he could make nothing of the old map of England that hung against the opposite wall, for age had turned it of a fine yellow

brown, something like that of a well-seasoned meerschaum. The drama that was going on was almost as familiar as the scene, nevertheless habit had not made him indifferent to it, and even in his present self-absorbed mood Adam felt a momentary stirring of the old fellow-feeling, as he looked at the rough men painfully holding pen or pencil with their cramped hands, or humbly labouring through their reading-lesson.

The reading class now seated on the form in front of the schoolmaster's desk consisted of the three most backward pupils. Adam would have known it, only by seeing Bartle Massey's face as he looked over his spectacles, which he had shifted to the ridge of his nose, not requiring them for present purposes. The face wore its mildest expression: the grizzled bushy eyebrows had taken their more acute angle of compassionate kindness, and the mouth, habitually compressed with a pout of the lower lip, was relaxed so as to be ready to speak a helpful word or syllable in a moment. This gentle expression was the more interesting because the schoolmaster's nose, an irregular 10
aquiline twisted a little on one side, had rather a formidable character; and his brow, moreover, had that peculiar tension which always impresses one as a sign of a keen impatient temperament: the blue veins stood out like cords under the transparent yellow skin, and this intimidating brow was softened by no tendency to baldness, for the grey bristly hair, cut down to about an inch in length, stood round it in as close ranks as ever. 20

"Nay, Bill, nay," Bartle was saying in a kind tone, as he nodded to Adam, "begin that again, and then perhaps it'll 30
come to you what 'd, r, y' spells. It's the same lesson you read last week, you know."

'Bill' was a sturdy fellow, aged four-and-twenty, an ex-

cellent stone-sawyer, who could get as good wages as any man in the trade of his years ; but he found a reading-lesson in words of one syllable a harder matter to deal with than the hardest stone he had ever had to saw. The letters, he complained, were so "uncommon alike, there was no tellin' 'em one from another," the sawyer's business not being concerned with minute differences such as exist between a letter with its tail turned up and a letter with its tail turned down. But Bill had a firm determination that
10 he would learn to read, founded chiefly on two reasons : first, that Tom Hazelow, his cousin, could read anything "right off," whether it was print or writing, and Tom had sent him a letter from twenty miles off, saying how he was prospering in the world, and had got an overlooker's place ; secondly, that Sam Phillips, who sawed with him, had learned to read when he was turned twenty ; and what could be done by a little fellow like Sam Phillips, Bill considered, could be done by himself, seeing that he could pound Sam into wet clay if circumstances required it. So
20 here he was, pointing his big finger towards three words at once, and turning his head on one side that he might keep better hold with his eye of the one word which was to be discriminated out of the group. The amount of knowledge Bartle Massey must possess was something so dim and vast that Bill's imagination recoiled before it : he would hardly have ventured to deny that the schoolmaster might have something to do in bringing about the regular return of daylight and the changes in the weather.

The man seated next to Bill was of a very different type :
30 he was a Methodist brickmaker, who, after spending thirty years of his life in perfect satisfaction with his ignorance, had lately "got religion," and along with it the desire to read the Bible. But with him, too, learning was a heavy

business, and on his way out to-night he had offered as usual a special prayer for help, seeing that he had undertaken this hard task with a single eye to the nourishment of his soul—that he might have a greater abundance of texts and hymns wherewith to banish evil memories and the temptations of old habit; or, in brief language, the devil. For the brickmaker had been a notorious poacher, and was suspected, though there was no good evidence against him, of being the man who had shot a neighbouring gamekeeper in the leg. . . .

10

The third beginner was a much more promising pupil. He was a tall but thin and wiry man, nearly as old as Brimstone, with a very pale face, and hands stained a deep blue. He was a dyer, who, in the course of dipping homespun wool and old women's petticoats, had got fired with the ambition to learn a great deal more about the strange secrets of colour. He had already a high reputation in the district for his dyes, and he was bent on discovering some method by which he could reduce the expense of crimsons and scarlets. The druggist at Treddleston had given him a notion that he might save himself a great deal of labour and expense if he could learn to read, and so he had begun to give his spare hours to the night-school, resolving that his "little chap" should lose no time in coming to Mr Massey's day-school as soon as he was old enough.

20

It was touching to see these three big men, with the marks of their hard labour about them, anxiously bending over the worn books, and painfully making out, "The grass is green," "The sticks are dry," "The corn is ripe"—a very hard lesson to pass to after columns of single words all alike except in the first letter. It was almost as if three tough animals were making humble efforts to learn how they might become human. And it touched the tenderest

30

fibre in Bartle Massey's nature, for such full-grown children as these were the only pupils for whom he had no severe epithets, and no impatient tones. He was not gifted with an imperturbable temper, and on music-nights it was apparent that patience could never be an easy virtue to him ; but this evening, as he glances over his spectacles at Bill Downes, the sawyer, who is turning his head on one side with a desperate sense of blankness before the letters d, r, y, his eyes shed their mildest and most encouraging
10 light.

After the reading class, two youths, between sixteen and nineteen, came up with imaginary bills of parcels, which they had been writing out on their slates, and were now required to calculate "off-hand"—a test which they stood with such imperfect success that Bartle Massey, whose eyes had been glaring at them ominously through his spectacles for some minutes, at length burst out in a bitter, high-pitched tone, pausing between every sentence to rap the floor with a knobbed stick which rested between his legs.

20 "Now, you see, you don't do this thing a bit better than you did a fortnight ago ; and I'll tell you what's the reason. You want to learn accounts—that's well and good. But you think all you need do to learn accounts is to come to me and do sums for an hour or so, two or three times a-week ; and no sooner do you get your caps on and turn out of doors again, than you sweep the whole thing clean out of your mind. You go whistling about, and take no more care what you're thinking of than if your heads were
30 gutters for any rubbish to swill through that happened to be in the way ; and if you get a good notion in 'em, it's pretty soon washed out again. You think knowledge is to be got cheap—you'll come and pay Bartle Massey sixpence a-week, and he'll make you clever at figures without your

taking any trouble. But knowledge isn't to be got with paying sixpence, let me tell you : if you're to know figures, you must turn 'em over in your own heads, and keep your thoughts fixed on 'em. There's nothing you can't turn into a sum, for there's nothing but what's got number in it—even a fool. You may say to yourselves, 'I'm one fool, and Jack's another ; if my fool's head weighed four pound, and Jack's three pound three ounces and three quarters, how many pennyweights heavier would my head be than Jack's?' A man that had got his heart in learning figures would 10 make sums for himself, and work 'em in his head : when he sat at his shoemaking he'd count his stitches by fives, and then put a price on his stitches, say half a farthing, and then see how much money he could get in an hour ; and then ask himself how much money he'd get in a day at that rate ; and then how much ten workmen would get working three, or twenty, or a hundred years at that rate—and all the while his needle would be going just as fast as if he left his head empty for the devil to dance in. But the long and the short of it is—I'll have nobody in my 20 night-school that doesn't strive to learn what he comes to learn, as hard as if he was striving to get out of a dark hole into broad daylight. I'll send no man away because he's stupid : if Billy Taft, the idiot, wanted to learn anything, I'd not refuse to teach him. But I'll not throw away good knowledge on people who think they can get it by the sixpenn'orth, and carry it away with 'em as they would an ounce of snuff. So never come to me again, if you can't show that you've been working with your own heads, instead of thinking you can pay for mine to work for you. That's 30 the last word I've got to say to you."

With this final sentence Bartle Massey gave a sharper rap than ever with his knobbed stick, and the discomfited

lads got up to go with a sulky look. The other pupils had happily only their writing-books to show, in various stages of progress from pot-hooks to round text; and mere pen-strokes, however perverse, were less exasperating to Bartle than false arithmetic. He was a little more severe than usual on Jacob Storey's Z's, of which poor Jacob had written a pageful, all with their tops turned the wrong way, with a puzzled sense that they were not right "somehow." But he observed in apology that it was a letter you never
10 wanted hardly, and he thought it had only been put there "to finish off th' alphabet, like, though ampusand (&) would ha' done as well, for what he could see."

At last the pupils had all taken their hats and said their "Good-nights," and Adam, knowing his old master's habits, rose and said, "Shall I put the candles out, Mr Massey?"

"Yes, my boy, yes, all but this, which I'll carry into the house; and just lock the outer door, now you're near it," said Bartle, getting his stick in the fitting angle to help him
20 in descending from his stool. He was no sooner on the ground than it became obvious why the stick was necessary—the left leg was much shorter than the right. But the schoolmaster was so active with his lameness, that it was hardly thought of as a misfortune; and if you had seen him make his way along the schoolroom floor, and up the step into his kitchen, you would perhaps have understood why the naughty boys sometimes felt that his pace might be indefinitely quickened, and that he and his stick might
29 overtake them even in their swiftest run.—*Adam Bede.*

c. A DINNER-PARTY AT CHEVEREL MANOR.

At length the much-expected day arrived, and the brightest of September suns was lighting up the yellowing lime-trees, as about five o'clock Lady Assher's carriage drove under the portico. Caterina, seated at work in her own room, heard the rolling of the wheels, followed presently by the opening and shutting of doors, and the sound of voices in the corridors. Remembering that the dinner-hour was six, and that Lady Cheverel had desired her to be in the drawing-room early, she started up to dress, and was delighted to find herself feeling suddenly brave and strong. Curiosity to see Miss Assher—the thought that Anthony was in the house—the wish not to look unattractive, were feelings that brought some colour to her lips, and made it easy to attend to her toilette. They would ask her to sing this evening, and she would sing well. Miss Assher should not think her utterly insignificant. So she put on her grey silk gown and her cherry-coloured ribbon with as much care as if she had been herself the betrothed; not forgetting the pair of round pearl earrings which Sir Christopher had told Lady Cheverel to give her, because Tina's little ears were so pretty. 10 20

Quick as she had been, she found Sir Christopher and Lady Cheverel in the drawing-room chatting with Mr Gilfil, and telling him how handsome Miss Assher was, but how entirely unlike her mother—apparently resembling her father only.

“Aha!” said Sir Christopher, as he turned to look at Caterina, “what do you think of this, Maynard? Did you ever see Tina look so pretty before? Why, that little grey gown has been made out of a bit of my lady's, hasn't it? 30

It doesn't take anything much larger than a pocket-handkerchief to dress the little monkey."

Lady Cheverel, too, serenely radiant in the assurance a single glance had given her of Lady Assher's inferiority, smiled approval, and Caterina was in one of those moods of self-possession and indifference which come as the ebb-tide between the struggles of passion. She retired to the piano, and busied herself with arranging her music, not at all insensible to the pleasure of being looked at with admiration the while, and thinking that, the next time the door opened, Captain Wybrow would enter, and she would speak to him quite cheerfully. But when she heard him come in, and the scent of roses floated towards her, her heart gave one great leap. She knew nothing till he was pressing her hand, and saying, in the old easy way, "Well, Caterina, how do you do? You look quite blooming."

She felt her cheeks reddening with anger that he could speak and look with such perfect nonchalance. Ah! he was too deeply in love with some one else to remember anything he had felt for *her*. But the next moment she was conscious of her folly;—"as if he could show any feeling then!" This conflict of emotions stretched into a long interval the few moments that elapsed before the door opened again, and her own attention, as well as that of all the rest, was absorbed by the entrance of the two ladies.

The daughter was the more striking from the contrast she presented to her mother, a round-shouldered, middle-sized woman, who had once had the transient pink-and-white beauty of a blonde, with ill-defined features and early embonpoint. Miss Assher was tall, and gracefully though substantially formed, carrying herself with an air of mingled graciousness and self-confidence; her dark-brown hair, untouched by powder, hanging in bushy curls round her face,

and falling behind in long thick ringlets nearly to her waist. The brilliant carmine tint of her well-rounded cheeks, and the finely-cut outline of her straight nose, produced an impression of splendid beauty, in spite of commonplace brown eyes, a narrow forehead, and thin lips. She was in mourning, and the dead black of her crape dress, relieved here and there by jet ornaments, gave the fullest effect to her complexion, and to the rounded whiteness of her arms, bare from the elbow. The first *coup d'œil* was dazzling, and as she stood looking down with a gracious smile on Caterina, whom Lady Cheverel was presenting to her, the poor little thing seemed to herself to feel, for the first time, all the folly of her former dream. 10

"We are enchanted with your place, Sir Christopher," said Lady Assher, with a feeble kind of pompousness, which she seemed to be copying from some one else; "I'm sure your nephew must have thought Farleigh wretchedly out of order. Poor Sir John was so very careless about keeping up the house and grounds. I often talked to him about it, but he said, 'Pooh, pooh! 20 as long as my friends find a good dinner and a good bottle of wine, they won't care about my ceilings being rather smoky.' He was so very hospitable, was Sir John."

"I think the view of the house from the park, just after we passed the bridge, particularly fine," said Miss Assher, interposing rather eagerly, as if she feared her mother might be making infelicitous speeches, "and the pleasure of the first glimpse was all the greater because Anthony would describe nothing to us beforehand. He would not spoil our first impressions by raising false ideas. I long to 30 go over the house, Sir Christopher, and learn the history of all your architectural designs, which Anthony says have cost you so much time and study."

"Take care how you set an old man talking about the past, my dear," said the Baronet; "I hope we shall find something pleasanter for you to do than turning over my old plans and pictures. Our friend Mr Gilfil here has found a beautiful mare for you, and you can scour the country to your heart's content. Anthony has sent us word what a horsewoman you are."

Miss Assher turned to Mr Gilfil with her most beaming smile, and expressed her thanks with the elaborate graciousness of a person who means to be thought charming, and is sure of success.

"Pray do not thank me," said Mr Gilfil, "till you have tried the mare. She has been ridden by Lady Sara Linter for the last two years; but one lady's taste may not be like another's in horses, any more than in other matters."

While this conversation was passing, Captain Wybrow was leaning against the mantelpiece, contenting himself with responding from under his indolent eyelids to the glances Miss Assher was constantly directing towards him as she spoke. "She is very much in love with him," thought Caterina. But she was relieved that Anthony remained passive in his attentions. She thought, too, that he was looking paler and more languid than usual. "If he didn't love her very much—if he sometimes thought of the past with regret—I think I could bear it all, and be glad to see Sir Christopher made happy."

During dinner there was a little incident which confirmed these thoughts. When the sweets were on the table, there was a mould of jelly just opposite Captain Wybrow, and being inclined to take some himself, he first invited Miss Assher, who coloured, and said, in rather a sharper key than usual, "Have you not learned by this time that I never take jelly?"

"Don't you?" said Captain Wybrow, whose perceptions were not acute enough for him to notice the difference of a semitone. "I should have thought you were fond of it. There was always some on the table at Farleigh, I think."

"You don't seem to take much interest in my likes and dislikes."

"I'm too much possessed by the happy thought that you like me," was the *ex officio* reply, in silvery tones.

This little episode was unnoticed by every one but Caterina. Sir Christopher was listening with polite attention to Lady Assher's history of her last man-cook, who was first-rate at gravies, and for that reason pleased Sir John—he was so particular about his gravies, was Sir John: and so they kept the man six years in spite of his bad pastry. Lady Cheverel and Mr Gilfil were smiling at Rupert the bloodhound, who had pushed his great head under his master's arm, and was taking a survey of the dishes, after snuffing at the contents of the Baronet's plate. 10

When the ladies were in the drawing-room again, Lady Assher was soon deep in a statement to Lady Cheverel of her views about burying people in woollen. 20

"To be sure, you must have a woollen dress, because it's the law, you know; but that need hinder no one from putting linen underneath. I always used to say, 'If Sir John died to-morrow, I would bury him in his shirt'; and I did. And let me advise you to do so by Sir Christopher. You never saw Sir John, Lady Cheverel. He was a large tall man, with a nose just like Beatrice, and so very particular about his shirts."

Miss Assher, meanwhile, had seated herself by Caterina, and, with that smiling affability which seems to say, "I am really not at all proud, though you might expect it of me," said— 30

"Anthony tells me you sing so very beautifully. I hope we shall hear you this evening."

"Oh yes," said Caterina, quietly, without smiling; "I always sing when I am wanted to sing."

"I envy you such a charming talent. Do you know, I have no ear; I cannot hum the smallest tune, and I delight in music so. Is it not unfortunate? But I shall have quite a treat while I am here; Captain Wybrow says you will give us some music every day."

10 "I should have thought you wouldn't care about music if you had no ear," said Caterina, becoming epigrammatic by force of grave simplicity.

"Oh, I assure you, I dote on it; and Anthony is so fond of it; it would be so delightful if I could play and sing to him.—though he says he likes me best not to sing, because it doesn't belong to his idea of me. What style of music do you like best?"

"I don't know. I like all beautiful music."

"And are you as fond of riding as of music?"

20 "No; I never ride. I think I should be very frightened."

"Oh no! indeed you would not, after a little practice. I have never been in the least timid. I think Anthony is more afraid for me than I am for myself; and since I have been riding with him, I have been obliged to be more careful, because he is so nervous about me."

Caterina made no reply; but she said to herself, "I wish she would go away and not talk to me. She only wants me to admire her good-nature, and to talk about Anthony."

Miss Assher was thinking at the same time, "This Miss
30 Sarti seems a stupid little thing. Those musical people often are. But she is prettier than I expected; Anthony said she was not pretty."

Happily at this moment Lady Assher called her daughter.

attention to the embroidered cushions, and Miss Assher, walking to the opposite sofa, was soon in conversation with Lady Cheverel about tapestry and embroidery in general, while her mother, feeling herself superseded there, came and placed herself beside Caterina.

"I hear you are the most beautiful singer," was of course the opening remark. "All Italians sing so beautifully. I travelled in Italy with Sir John when we were first married, and we went to Venice, where they go about in gondolas, you know. You don't wear powder, I see. No more will Beatrice; though many people think her curls would look all the better for powder. She has so much hair, hasn't she? Our last maid dressed it much better than this; but, do you know, she wore Beatrice's stockings before they went to the wash, and we couldn't keep her after that, could we?" 10

Caterina, accepting the question as a mere bit of rhetorical effect, thought it superfluous to reply, till Lady Assher repeated, "Could we, now?" as if Tina's sanction were essential to her repose of mind. After a faint "No" she went on. 20

"Maids are so very troublesome, and Beatrice is so particular, you can't imagine. I often say to her, 'My dear, you can't have perfection.' That very gown she has on—to be sure, it fits her beautifully now—but it has been unmade and made up again twice. But she is like poor Sir John—he was so very particular about his own things, was Sir John. Is Lady Cheverel particular?"

"Rather. But Mrs Sharp has been her maid twenty years."

"I wish there was any chance of our keeping Griffin twenty years. But I am afraid we shall have to part with her because her health is so delicate; and she is so obsti- 30

nate, she will not take bitters as I want her. *You* look delicate, now. Let me recommend you to take camomile tea in a morning, fasting. Beatrice is so strong and healthy, she never takes any medicine; but if I had had twenty girls, and they had been delicate, I should have given them all camomile tea. It strengthens the constitution beyond anything. Now, will you promise me to take camomile tea?"

"Thank you; I'm not at all ill," said Caterina. "I've
10 always been pale and thin."

Lady Assher was sure camomile tea would make all the difference in the world—Caterina must see if it wouldn't—and then went dribbling on like a leaky shower-bath, until the early entrance of the gentlemen created a diversion, and she fastened on Sir Christopher, who probably began to think that, for poetical purposes, it would be better not to meet one's first love again, after a lapse of forty years.—*Scenes of Clerical Life*. "Mr Gilfil's Love-Story."

d. MRS POYSER "HAS HER SAY OUT."

Something unwonted must clearly be in the wind, for
20 the old Squire's visits to his tenantry were rare; and though Mrs Poyser had during the last twelvemonth recited many imaginary speeches, meaning even more than met the ear, which she was quite determined to make to him the next time he appeared within the gates of the Hall Farm, the speeches had always remained imaginary.

"Good-day, Mrs Poyser," said the old Squire, peering at her with his short-sighted eyes—a mode of looking at her which, as Mrs Poyser observed, "allays aggravated her: it was as if you was a insect, and he was going to dab his
30 finger-nail on you."

However, she said, "Your servant, sir," and curtsied with an air of perfect deference as she advanced towards him: she was not the woman to misbehave towards her betters, and fly in the face of the catechism, without severe provocation.

"Is your husband at home, Mrs Poyser?"

"Yes, sir; he's only i' the rick-yard. I'll send for him in a minute, if you'll please to get down and step in."

"Thank you; I will do so. I want to consult him about a little matter; but you are quite as much concerned in it, if not more. I must have your opinion too." 10

"Hetty, run and tell your uncle to come in," said Mrs Poyser, as they entered the house, and the old gentleman bowed low in answer to Hetty's curtsy; while Totty, conscious of a pinafore stained with gooseberry jam, stood hiding her face against the clock, and peeping round furtively.

"What a fine old kitchen this is!" said Mr Donnithorne, looking round admiringly. He always spoke in the same deliberate, well-chiselled, polite way, whether his words were sugary or venomous. "And you keep it so exquisitely clean, Mrs Poyser. I like these premises, do you know, beyond any on the estate." 20

"Well, sir, since you're fond of 'em, I should be glad if you'd let a bit o' repairs be done to 'em, for the boarding's i' that state, as we're like to be eaten up wi' rats and mice; and the cellar, you may stan' up to your knees i' water in't, if you like to go down; but perhaps you'd rather believe my words. Won't you please to sit down, sir?"

"Not yet; I must see your dairy. I have not seen it for years, and I hear on all hands about your fine cheese and butter," said the Squire, looking politely unconscious that there could be any question on which he and Mrs 30

Poyser might happen to disagree. "I think I see the door open, there: you must not be surprised if I cast a covetous eye on your cream and butter. I don't expect that Mrs Satchell's cream and butter will bear comparison with yours."

"I can't say, sir, I'm sure. It's seldom I see other folks's butter, though there's some on it as one's no need to see—the smell's enough."

"Ah, now this I like," said Mr Donnithorne, looking
10 round at the damp temple of cleanliness, but keeping near the door. "I'm sure I should like my breakfast better if I knew the butter and cream came from this dairy. Thank you, that really is a pleasant sight. Unfortunately, my slight tendency to rheumatism makes me afraid of damp: I'll sit down in your comfortable kitchen. Ah, Poyser, how do you do? In the midst of business, I see, as usual. I've been looking at your wife's beautiful dairy—the best manager in the parish, is she not?"

Mr Poyser had just entered in shirt-sleeves and open
20 waistcoat, with a face a shade redder than usual, from the exertion of "pitching." As he stood, red, rotund, and radiant, before the small, wiry, cool, old gentleman, he looked like a prize apple by the side of a withered crab.

"Will you please to take this chair, sir?" he said, lifting his father's arm-chair forward a little: "you'll find it easy."

"No, thank you, I never sit in easy-chairs," said the old gentleman, seating himself on a small chair near the door.

"Do you know, Mrs Poyser—sit down, pray, both of you
30 —I've been far from contented, for some time, with Mrs Satchell's dairy management. I think she has not a good method, as you have."

"Indeed, sir; I can't speak to that," said Mrs Poyser,

in a hard voice, rolling and unrolling her knitting, and looking icily out of the window, as she continued to stand opposite the Squire. Poyser might sit down if he liked, she thought: *she* wasn't going to sit down, as if she'd give in to any such smooth-tongued palaver. Mr Poyser, who looked and felt the reverse of icy, did sit down in his three-cornered chair.

"And now, Poyser, as Satchell is laid up, I am intending to let the Chase Farm to a respectable tenant. I'm tired of having a farm on my own hands—nothing is made the best of in such cases, as you know. A satisfactory bailiff is hard to find; and I think you and I, Poyser, and your excellent wife here, can enter into a little arrangement in consequence, which will be to our mutual advantage." 10

"Oh," said Mr Poyser, with a good-natured blankness of imagination as to the nature of the arrangement.

"If I'm called upon to speak, sir," said Mrs Poyser, after glancing at her husband with pity at his softness, "you know better than me; but I don't see what the Chase Farm is to us—we've cumber enough with our own farm. Not but what I'm glad to hear of anybody respectable coming into the parish: there's some as ha' been brought in as hasn't been looked on in that character." 20

"You're likely to find Mr Thurle an excellent neighbour, I assure you: such a one as you will feel glad to have accommodated by the little plan I'm going to mention; especially as I hope you will find it as much to your own advantage as his."

"Indeed, sir, if it's anything to our advantage, it'll be the first offer of the sort I've heard of. It's them as take advantage that get advantage in this world, I think: folks have to wait long enough afore it's brought to 'em." 30

"The fact is, Poyser," said the Squire, ignoring Mrs

Poyser's theory of worldly prosperity, "there is too much dairy land, and too little plough land, on the Chase Farm, to suit Thurle's purpose—indeed, he will only take the farm on condition of some change in it: his wife, it appears, is not a clever dairywoman, like yours. Now, the plan I'm thinking of is to effect a little exchange. If you were to have the Höllo Pastures, you might increase your dairy, which must be so profitable under your wife's management; and I should request you, Mrs Poyser, to
 10 supply my house with milk, cream, and butter, at the market prices. On the other hand, Poyser, you might let Thurle have the Lower and Upper Ridges, which really, with our wet seasons, would be a good riddance for you. There is much less risk in dairy land than corn land."

Mr Poyser was leaning forward, with his elbows on his knees, his head on one side, and his mouth screwed up—apparently absorbed in making the tips of his fingers meet so as to represent with perfect accuracy the ribs of a ship. He was much too acute a man not to see through the whole
 20 business, and to foresee perfectly what would be his wife's view of the subject; but he disliked giving unpleasant answers: unless it was on a point of farming practice, he would rather give up than have a quarrel, any day; and, after all, it mattered more to his wife than to him. So, after a few moments' silence, he looked up at her and said mildly, "What dost say?"

Mrs Poyser had had her eyes fixed on her husband with cold severity during his silence, but now she turned away her head with a toss, looked icily at the opposite roof of
 30 the cow-shed, and spearing her knitting together with the loose pin, held it firmly between her clasped hands.

"Say? Why, I say you may do as you like about giving up any o' your corn land afore your lease is up, which it

won't be for a year come next Michaelmas, but I'll not consent to take more dairy work into my hands, either for love or money; and there's nayther love nor money here, as I can see, on'y other folks's love o' theirselves, and the money as is to go into other folks's pockets. I know there's them as is born t' own the land, and them as is born to sweat on't"—here Mrs Poyser paused to gasp a little—"and I know it's christened folks's duty to submit to their better's as far as flesh and blood 'ull bear it; but I'll not make a martyr o' myself, and wear myself to skin 10 and bone, and worret myself as if I was a churn wi' butter a-coming in't, for no landlord in England, not if he was King George himself."

"No, no, my dear Mrs Poyser, certainly not," said the Squire, still confident in his own powers of persuasion, "you must not overwork yourself; but don't you think your work will rather be lessened than increased in this way? There is so much milk required at the Abbey, that you will have little increase of cheese and butter making from the addition to your dairy; and I believe 20 selling the milk is the most profitable way of disposing of dairy produce, is it not?"

"Ay, that's true," said Mr Poyser, unable to repress an opinion on a question of farming profits, and forgetting that it was not in this case a purely abstract question. •

"I daresay," said Mrs Poyser bitterly, turning her head half-way towards her husband, and looking at the vacant arm-chair—"I daresay it's true for men as sit i' th' chimney-corner and make believe as everything's cut wi' ins an' outs 30 to fit int' everything else. If you could make a pudding wi' thinking o' the batter, it 'ud be easy getting dinner. How do I know whether the milk 'ull be wanted constant?

What's to make me sure as the house won't be put o' board wage afore we're many months older, and then I may have to lie awake o' nights wi' twenty gallons o' milk on my mind—and Dingall 'ull take no more butter, let alone paying for it; and we must fat pigs till we're obliged to beg the butcher on our knees to buy 'em, and lose half of 'em wi' the measles. And there's the fetching and carrying, as 'ud be welly half a day's work for a man an' hooss—*that's* to be took out o' the profits, I reckon? But there's folks 'ud
 10 hold a sieve under the pump and expect to carry away the water."

"That difficulty—about the fetching and carrying—you will not have, Mrs Poyser," said the Squire, who thought that this entrance into particulars indicated a distant inclination to compromise on Mrs Poyser's part—"Bethell will do that regularly with the cart and pony."

"Oh, sir, begging your pardon, I've never been used t' having gentlefolks's servants coming about my back places, a-making love to both the gells at once, and keeping 'em
 20 with their hands on their hips listening to all manner o' gossip when they should be down on their knees a-scouring. If we're to go to ruin, it shanna be wi' having our back kitchen turned into a public."

"Well, Poyser," said the Squire, shifting his tactics, and looking as if he thought Mrs Poyser had suddenly withdrawn from the proceedings and left the room, "'you can turn the Hollqws into feeding-land. I can easily make another arrangement about supplying my house. And I shall not forget your readiness to accommodate your land-
 30 lord as well as a neighbour. I know, you will be glad to have your lease renewed for three years when the present one expires; otherwise, I daresay Thurle, who is 'a man of some capital, would be glad to take both the farms,

as they could be worked so well together. But I don't want to part with an old tenant like you."

To be thrust out of the discussion in this way would have been enough to complete Mrs Poyser's exasperation, even without the final threat. Her husband, really alarmed at the possibility of their leaving the old place where he had been bred and born—for he believed the old Squire had small spite enough for anything—was beginning a mild remonstrance explanatory of the inconvenience he should find in having to buy and sell more stock, with— 10

"Well, sir, I think as it's rether hard" . . . when Mrs Poyser burst in with the desperate determination to have her say out this once, though it were to rain notices to quit, and the only shelter were the workhouse.

"Then, sir, if I may speak—as, for all I'm a woman, and there's folks as thinks a woman's fool enough to stan' by an' look on while the men sign her soul away, I've a right to speak, for I make one quarter o' the rent, and save another quarter—I say, if Mr 'Thurle's so ready to take farms under you, it's a pity but what he should take 20 this, and see if he likes to live in a house wi' all the plagues o' Egypt in't—wi' the cellar full o' water, and frogs and toads hoppin' up the steps by dozens—and the floors rotten, and the rats and mice gnawing every bit o' cheese, and runnin' over our heads as we lie i' bed till we expect 'em to eat us up alive—as it's a mercy they hanna eat the children long ago. I should like to see if there's another tenant besides Poyser as 'ud put up wi' never having a bit o' repairs done till a place tumbles down—and not then, on'y wi' begging and praying, and having to pay half—and 30 being strung up wi' the rent as it's much if he gets enough out o' the land to pay, for all he's put his own money into the ground beforehand. See if you'll get a stranger to lead

such a life here as that: a maggot must be born i' the rotten cheese to like it, I reckon. You may run away from my words, sir," continued Mrs Poyser, following the old Squire beyond the door—for after the first moments of stunned surprise he had got up, and, waving his hand towards her with a smile, had walked out towards his pony. But it was impossible for him to get away immediately, for John was walking the pony up and down the yard, and was some distance from the causeway when
10 his master beckoned.

"You may run away from my words, sir, and you may go spinnin' underhand ways o' doing us a mischief, for you've got Old Harry to your friend, though nobody else is, but I tell you for once as we're not dumb creatures to be abused and made money on by them as ha' got the lash i' their hands, for want o' knowing how t' undo the tackle. An' if I'm th' only one as speaks my mind, there's plenty o' the same way o' thinking i' this parish and the next to 't, for your name's no better than a brim-
20 stone match in everybody's nose—if it isna two-three old folks as you think o' saving your soul by giving 'em a bit o' flannel and a drop o' porridge. An' you may be right i' thinking it'll take but little to save your soul, for it'll be the smallest savin' y' iver made, wi' all your scrapin'."

There are occasions on which two servant-girls and a waggoner may be a formidable audience, and as the Squire rode away on his black pony, even the gift of short-sightedness did not prevent him from being aware that
30 Molly and Nancy and Tim were grinning not far from him. Perhaps he suspected that sour old John was grinning behind him—which was also the fact. Meanwhile the bull-dog, the black-and-tan terrier, Alick's sheep-dog,

and the gander hissing at a safe distance from the pony's heels, carried out the idea of Mrs Poyser's solo in an impressive quartett.

Mrs Poyser, however, had no sooner seen the pony move off than she turned round, gave the two hilarious damsels a look which drove them into the back kitchen, and, unspearing her knitting, began to knit again with her usual rapidity, as she re-entered the house.

"Thee'st done it now," said Mr Poyser, a little alarmed and uneasy, but not without some triumphant amusement 10 at his wife's outbreak.

"Yes, I know I've done it," said Mrs Poyser; "but I've had my say out, and I shall be th' easier for't all my life. There's no pleasure i' living, if you're to be corked up for ever, and only dribble your mind out by the sly, like a leaky barrel. I shan't repent saying what I think, if I live to be as old as th' old Squire; and there's little likelihoods—for it seems as if them as aren't wanted here are th' only folks as aren't wanted i' th' other world."—*Adam Bede.*

20

c. MRS POYSER ON MEN, WOMEN, AND MARRIAGE.

"Why, Adam, how happened you not to be at church on Sunday? answer me that, you rascal. The anthem went limping without you. Are you going to disgrace your schoolmaster in his old age?"

"No, Mr Massey," said Adam. "Mr and Mrs Poyser can tell you where I was. I was in no bad company."

"She's gone, Adam—gone to Snowfield," said Mr Poyser, reminded of Dinah for the first time this evening. "I thought you'd ha' persuaded her better. Nought 'ud hold her, but she must go yesterday forenoon. The missis has 30

hardly got over it. I thought she'd ha' no sperrit for th' harvest supper."

Mrs Poyser had thought of Dinah several times since Adam had come in, but she had had "no heart" to mention the bad news.

"What!" said Bartle, with an air of disgust. "Was there a woman concerned? Then I give you up, Adam."

"But it's a woman you'n spoke well on, Bartle," said Mr Poyser. "Come, now, you canna draw back; you said
10 once as women wouldna ha' been a bad invention if they'd all been like Dinah."

"I meant her voice, man—I meant her voice, that was all," said Bartle. "I can bear to hear her speak without wanting to put wool in my ears." As for other things, I daresay she's like the rest o' the women—thinks two and two 'ull come to make five, if she cries and bothers enough about it."

"Ay, ay!" said Mrs Poyser; "one 'ud think, an' hear some folks talk, as the men war 'cute enough to count the
20 corns in a bag o' wheat wi' only smelling at it. They can see through a barn-door, *they* can. Perhaps that's the reason they can see so little o' this side on't."

Martin Poyser shook with delighted laughter, and winked at Adam, as much as to say the schoolmaster was in for it now.

"Ah!" said Bartle, sneeringly, "the women are quick enough—they're quick enough. They know the rights of a story before they hear it, and can tell a man what his thoughts are before he knows 'em himself."

30 "Like enough," said Mrs Poyser; "for the men are mostly so slow, their thoughts overrun 'em, an' they can only catch 'em by the tail. I can count a stocking-top while a man's getting's tongue ready; an' when he outs

wi' his speech at last, there's little broth to be made on't. It's your dead chicks take the longest hatchin'. Howiver, I'm not denyin' the women are foolish: God Almighty made 'em to match the men."

"Match!" said Bartle; "ay, as vinegar matches one's teeth. If a man says a word, his wife 'll match it with a contradiction; if he's a mind for hot meat, his wife 'll match it with cold bacon; if he laughs, she'll match him with whimpering. She's such a match as the horse-fly is to th' horse: she's got the right venom to sting him with—the 10 right venom to sting him with."

"Yes," said Mrs Poyser, "I know what the men like—a poor soft, as 'ud simper at 'em like the pictur o' the sun, whether they did right or wrong, an' say thank you for a kick, an' pretend she didna know which end she stood uppermost, till her husband told her. That's what a man wants in a wife, mostly; he wants to make sure o' one fool as 'ull tell him he's wise. But there's some men can do wi'out that—they think so much o' themselves a'ready; an' that's how it is there's old bachelors." 20

"Come, Craig," said Mr Poyser, jocosely, "you mun get married pretty quick, else you'll be set down for an old bachelor; an' you see what the women 'ull think on you."

"Well," said Mr Craig, willing to conciliate Mrs Poyser, and setting a high value on his own compliments, "I like a cleverish woman—a woman o' sperrit—a managing woman."

"You're out there, Craig," said Bartle, drily; "you're out there. You judge o' your garden-stuff on a better plan than that: you pick the things for what they can excel in 30 —for what they can excel in. You don't value your peas for their roots, or your carrots for their flowers. Now, that's the way you should choose women: their cleverness

'll never come to much—never come to much; but they make excellent simpletons, ripe and strong-flavoured."

"What dost say to that?" said Mr Poyser, throwing himself back and looking merrily at his wife.

"Say!" answered Mrs Poyser, with dangerous fire kindling in her eye; "why, I say as some folks' tongues are like the clocks as run on strikin', not to tell you the time o' the day, but because there's summat wrong i' their own inside."—*Ibid.*

f. THE JEWISH SABBATH.

- 10 When Deronda arrived at five o'clock, the shop was closed, and the door was opened for him by the Christian servant. When she showed him into the room behind the shop he was surprised at the prettiness of the scene. The house was old, and rather extensive at the back: probably the large room he now entered was gloomy by daylight, but now it was agreeably lit by a fine old brass lamp with seven oil-lights hanging above the snow-white cloth spread on the central table. The ceiling and walls were smoky, and all the surroundings were dark enough
- 20 to throw into relief the human figures, which had a Venetian glow of colouring. The grandmother was arrayed in yellowish brown with a large gold chain in lieu of the necklace, and by this light her yellow face with its darkly-marked eyebrows and framing roll of grey hair looked as handsome as was necessary for picturesque effect. Young Mrs Cohen was clad in red and black, with a string of large artificial pearls wound round and round her neck: the baby lay asleep in the cradle under a scarlet counterpane; Adelaide Rebekah was in braided amber; and
- 30 Jacob Alexander was in black velveteen with scarlet stock-

ings. As the four pairs of black eyes all glistened a welcome at Deronda, he was almost ashamed of the supercilious dislike these happy-looking creatures had raised in him by daylight. Nothing could be more cordial than the greeting he received, and both mother and grandmother seemed to gather more dignity from being seen on the private hearth, showing hospitality. •He looked round with some wonder at the old furniture: the oaken bureau and high side table must surely be mere matters of chance and economy, and not due to the family taste. A large 10 dish of blue-and-yellow ware was set up on the side table, and flanking it were two old silver vessels; in front of them a large volume in darkened vellum with a deep-ribbed back. In the corner at the farther end was an open door into an inner room, where there was also a light. •

Deronda took in these details by parenthetic glances while he met Jacob's pressing solicitude about the knife. He had taken the pains to buy one with the requisites of the hook and white handle, and produced it on demand, saying—

20

“Is that the sort of thing you want, Jacob?”

It was subjected to a severe scrutiny, the hook and blades were opened, and the article of barter with the cork-screw was drawn forth for comparison.

“Why do you like a hook better than a cork-screw?” said Deronda.

“’Cause I can get hold of things with a hook. A cork-screw won't go into anything but corks. But it's better for you, you can draw corks.”

“You agree' to change, then?” said Deronda, observing 30 that the grandmother was listening with delight. •

“What else have you got in your pockets?” said Jacob, with deliberative seriousness.

"Hush, hush, Jacob, love," said the grandmother. And Deronda, mindful of discipline, answered—

"I think I must not tell you that. Our business was with the knives."

Jacob looked up into his face scanningly for a moment or two, and apparently arriving at his conclusions, said gravely—

"I'll shwop," handing the cork-screw knife to Deronda, who pocketed it with corresponding gravity.

10 Immediately the small son of Shem ran off into the next room, whence his voice was heard in rapid chat; and then ran back again—when, seeing his father enter, he seized a little velveteen hat which lay on a chair and put it on to approach him. Cohen kept on his own hat, and took no notice of the visitor, but stood still while the two children went up to him and clasped his knees: then he laid his hands on each in turn and uttered his Hebrew benediction; whereupon the wife who had lately taken baby from the cradle brought it up to her husband and
20 held it under his outstretched hands, to be blessed in its sleep. For the moment Deronda thought that this pawn-broker proud of his vocation was not utterly prosaic.

"Well, sir, you found your welcome in my family, I think," said Cohen, putting down his hat and becoming his former self. "And you've been punctual. Nothing
like a little stress here," he added, tapping his side pocket, as he sat down. "It's good for us all in our turn. • I've felt it when I've had to make up payments. I began early—had to turn myself about and put myself into shapes to
30 fit every sort of box. • It's bracing, to the mind. Now then! let us see, let us see."

"That is the ring I spoke of," said Deronda, taking it from his finger. "I believe it cost a hundred pounds.

It will be a sufficient pledge to you for fifty, I think. I shall probably redeem it in a month or so."

Cohen's glistening eyes seemed to get a little nearer together as he met the ingenuous look of this crude young gentleman, who apparently supposed that redemption was a satisfaction to pawnbrokers. He took the ring, examined and returned it, saying with indifference, "Good, good. We'll talk of it after our meal. Perhaps you'll join us, if you've no objection. Me and my wife 'll feel honoured, and so will mother; won't you, mother?"

10

The invitation was doubly echoed, and Deronda gladly accepted it. All now turned and stood round the table. No dish was at present seen except one covered with a napkin; and Mrs Cohen had placed a china bowl near her husband that he might wash his hands in it. But after putting on his hat again, he paused, and called in a loud voice, "Mordecai!"

Can this be part of the religious ceremony? thought Deronda, not knowing what might be expected of the ancient hero. But he heard a "Yes" from the next room, 20 which made him look towards the open door; and there, to his astonishment, he saw the figure of the enigmatic Jew whom he had this morning met with in the book-shop. Their eyes met, and Mordecai looked as much surprised as Deronda—neither in his surprise making any sign of recognition? But when Mordecai was seating himself at the end of the table, he just bent his head to the guest in a cold and distant manner, as if the disappointment of the morning remained a disagreeable association with this new acquaintance.

30

Cohen now washed his hands, pronouncing Hebrew words the while: afterwards, he took off the napkin covering the dish and disclosed the two long flat loaves be-

sprinkled with seed—the memorial of the manna that fed the wandering forefathers—and breaking off small pieces gave one to each of the family, including Adelaide Rebekah, who stood on the chair with her whole length exhibited in her amber-coloured garment, her little Jewish nose lengthened by compression of the lip in the effort to make a suitable appearance. Cohen then uttered another Hebrew blessing, and after that, the male heads were uncovered, all seated themselves, and the meal went on without any
10 peculiarity that interested Deronda. He was not very conscious of what dishes he ate from, being preoccupied with a desire to turn the conversation in a way that would enable him to ask some leading question; and also with thinking of Mordecai, between whom and himself there was an exchange of fascinated, half-furtive glances. Mordecai had no handsome Sabbath garment, but instead of the thread-bare rusty black coat of the morning he wore one of light drab, which looked as if it had once been a handsome loose paletot now shrunk with washing; and this change
20 of clothing gave a still stronger accentuation to his dark-haired, eager face, which might have belonged to the prophet Ezekiel—also probably not modish in the eyes of contemporaries. It was noticeable that the thin tails of the fried fish were given to Mordecai; and in general the sort of share assigned to a poor relation—no doubt a “survival” of prehistoric practice, not yet generally admitted to be superstitious.

Mr Cohen kept up the conversation with much liveliness, introducing as subjects always in taste (the Jew is proud of
30 his loyalty) the Queen and the Royal Family, the Emperor and Empress of the French—into which both grandmother and wife entered with zest. Mrs Cohen the younger showed

an accurate memory of distinguished birthdays; and the elder assisted her son in informing the guest of what occurred when the Emperor and Empress were in England and visited the city, ten years before.

"I daresay you know all about it better than we do, sir," said Cohen, repeatedly, by way of preface to full information; and the interesting statements were kept up in a trio.

"Our baby is named *Eugenie Esther*," said young Mrs Cohen, vivaciously.

"It's wonderful how the Emperor's like a cousin of mine in the face," said the grandmother; "it struck me like lightning when I caught sight of him. I couldn't have thought it." 10

"Mother and me went to see the Emperor and Empress at the Crystal Palace," said Mr Cohen. "I had a fine piece of work to take care of mother; she might have been squeezed flat—though she was pretty near as lusty then as she is now. I said, if I had a hundred mothers I'd never take one of 'em to see the Emperor and Empress at the Crystal Palace again; and you may think a man 20 can't afford it when he's got but one mother—not if he'd ever so big an insurance on her." He stroked his mother's shoulder affectionately, and chuckled a little at his own humour.

"Your mother has been a widow a long while, perhaps," said Deronda, seizing his opportunity. "That has made your care for her the more needful."

"Ay, ay, it's a good many *yore-zeit* since I had to manage for her and myself," said Cohen, quickly. "I went early to it. It's that makes you a sharp knife." 30

"What does—what makes a sharp knife, father?" said Jacob, his cheek very much swollen with sweet-cake.

The father winked at his guest and said, "Having your nose put on the grindstone."

Jacob slipped from his chair with the piece of sweet-cake in his hand, and going close up to Mordecai, who had been totally silent hitherto, said, "What does that mean—putting my nose to the grindstone?"

"It means that you are to bear being hurt without making a noise," said Mordecai, turning his eyes benignly on the small face close to his. Jacob put the
10 corner of the cake into Mordecai's mouth as an invitation to bite, saying meanwhile, "I shan't, though," and keeping his eyes on the cake to observe how much of it went in this act of generosity. Mordecai took a bite and smiled, evidently meaning to please the lad, and the little incident made them both look more lovable. Deronda, however, felt with some vexation that he had taken little by his question.

"I fancy that is the right quarter for learning," said he, carrying on the subject that he might have an excuse for
20 addressing Mordecai, to whom he turned and said, "You have been a great student, I imagine."

"I have studied," was the quiet answer. "And you?—You know German, by the book you were buying."

"Yes, I have studied in Germany. Are you generally engaged in bookselling?" said Deronda.

"No; I only go to Mr Ram's shop every day to keep it while he goes to meals," said Mordecai, who was now looking at Deronda with what seemed a revival of his original interest: it seemed as if the face had some at-
30 tractive indication for him which now neutralised the former disappointment. After a slight pause, he said, "Perhaps you know Hebrew?"

"I am sorry to say, not at all."

Mordecai's countenance fell: he cast down his eyelids, looking at his hands, which lay crossed before him, and said no more. Deronda had now noticed more decisively than in their former interview a difficulty of breathing, which he thought must be a sign of consumption.

"I've had something else to do than to get book-learning," said Mr Cohen,— "I've had to make myself knowing about useful things. I know stones well,"—here he pointed to Deronda's ring. "I'm not afraid of taking that ring of yours at my own valuation. But now," he added, with a certain drop in his voice to a lower, more familiar nasal, "what do you want for it?" 10

"Fifty or sixty pounds," Deronda answered, rather too carelessly.

Cohen paused a little, thrust his hands into his pockets, fixed on Deronda a pair of glistening eyes that suggested a miraculous guinea-pig, and said, "Couldn't do you that. Happy to oblige, but couldn't go that lengths. Forty pound—say forty—I'll let you have forty on it."

Deronda was aware that Mordecai had looked up again at the words implying a monetary affair, and was now examining him again, while he said, "Very well; I shall redeem it in a month or so." 20

"Good. I'll make you out the ticket by-and-by," said Cohen, indifferently. Then he held up his finger as a sign that conversation must be deferred. He, Mordecai, and Jacob, put on their hats, and Cohen opened a thanksgiving, which was carried on by responses, till Mordecai delivered himself alone at some length, in a solemn chanting tone, with his chin slightly uplifted and his thin hands clasped easily before him. Not only in his accent and tone, but in his freedom from the self-consciousness which has reference to others' approbation, there could hardly have been a stronger 30

contrast to the Jew at the other end of the table. It was an unaccountable conjunction—the presence among these common, prosperous, shopkeeping types, of a man who, in an emaciated threadbare condition, imposed a certain awe on Deronda, and an embarrassment at not meeting his expectations.

No sooner had Mordecai finished his devotional strain, than rising, with a slight bend of his head to the stranger, he walked back into his room, and shut the door behind
10 him.

"That seems to be rather a remarkable man," said Deronda, turning to Cohen, who immediately set up his shoulders, put out his tongue slightly, and tapped his own brow. It was clearly to be understood that Mordecai did not come up to the standard of sanity which was set by Mr Cohen's view of men and things.

"Does he belong to your family?" said Deronda.

This idea appeared to be rather ludicrous to the ladies as well as to Cohen, and the family interchanged looks of
20 amusement.

"No, no," said Cohen. "Charity! charity! He works for me, and when he got weaker and weaker I took him in. He's an encumbrance; but he brings a blessing down, and he teaches the boy. Besides, he does the repairing at the watches and jewellery."—*Daniel Deronda*, 1876.

G. AN EVENING AT THE "RAINBOW."

The conversation, which was at a high pitch of animation when Silas approached the door of the Rainbow, had, as usual, been slow and intermittent when the company first assembled. The pipes began to be puffed in a silence
30 which had an air of severity; the more important cus-

tomers, who drank spirits and sat nearest the fire, staring at each other as if a bet were depending on the first man who winked; while the beer-drinkers, chiefly men in fustian jackets and smock-frocks, kept their eyelids down and rubbed their hands across their mouths, as if their draughts of beer were a funeral duty attended with embarrassing sadness. At last Mr Snell, the landlord, a man, of a neutral disposition, accustomed to stand aloof from human differences as those of beings who were all alike in need of liquor, broke silence, by saying in a doubtful tone 10 to his cousin the butcher—

"Some folks 'ud say that was a fine beast you druv in yesterday, Bob?"

The butcher, a jolly, smiling, red-haired man, was not disposed to answer rashly. He gave a few puffs before he spat and replied, "And they wouldn't be fur wrong, John."

After this feeble delusive thaw, the silence set in as severely as before.

"Was it a red Durham?" said the farrier, taking up the 20 thread of discourse after the lapse of a few minutes.

The farrier looked at the landlord, and the landlord looked at the butcher, as the person who must take the responsibility of answering.

"Red it was," said the butcher, in his good-humoured husky treble—"and a Durham it was."

"Then you needn't tell *me* who you bought it of," said the farrier, looking round with some triumph; "I know who it is has got the red Durhams o' this country-side. And she'd a white star on her brow, I'll bet a penny?" 30 The farrier leaned forward with his hands on his knees as he put this question; and his eyes twinkled knowingly.

"Well; yes—she might," said the butcher, slowly, con-

sidering that he was giving a decided affirmative. "I don't say contrary."

"I knew that very well," said the farrier, throwing himself backward again, and speaking defiantly; "if I don't know Mr Lammeter's cows, I should like to know who does—that's all. And as for the cow you've bought, bargain or no bargain, I've been at the drenching of her—contradick me who will."

The farrier looked fierce, and the mild butcher's conversational spirit was roused a little.

"I'm not for contradicting no man," he said; "I'm for peace and quietness. Some are for cutting long ribs—I'm for cutting 'em short myself; but I don't quarrel with 'em. All I say is, it's a lovely carkiss—and anybody as was reasonable, it 'ud bring tears into their eyes to look at it."

"Well, it's the cow as I drenched, whatever it is," pursued the farrier, angrily; "and it was Mr Lammeter's cow, else you told a lie when you said it was a red Durham."

"I tell no lies," said the butcher, with the same mild huskiness as before, "and I contradick none—not if a man was to swear himself black: he's no meat o' mine, nor none o' my bargains. All I say is, it's a lovely carkiss. And what I say I'll stick to; but I'll quarrel wi' no man."

"No," said the farrier, with bitter sarcasm, looking at the company generally; "and p'rhaps you aren't pig-headed; and p'rhaps you didn't say the cow was a red Durham; and p'rhaps you didn't say she'd got a star on her brow—stick to that, now you're at it."

"Come, come," said the landlord; "let the cow alone. The truth lies atween yqu: you're both right and both

wrong, as I allays say. And as for the cow's being Mr Lammeter's, I say nothing to that ; but this I say, as the Rainbow's the Rainbow. And for the matter o' that, if the talk is to be o' the Lammeter's, *you* know the most upo' that. head, eh, Mr Macey? You remember when first Mr Lammeter's father come into these parts, and took the Warrens?"

Mr Macey, tailor and parish-clerk, the latter of which functions rheumatism had of late obliged him to share with a small-featured young man who sat opposite him, held his white head on one side, and twirled his thumbs with an air of complacency, slightly seasoned with criticism. He smiled pityingly, in answer to the landlord's appeal, and said—

"Ay, ay ; I know, I know ; but I let other folks talk. I've laid by now, and gev up to the young uns. Ask them as have been to school at Tarley : they've learnt pernouncing ; that's come up since my day."

"If you're pointing at me, Mr Macey," said the deputy-clerk, with an air of anxious propriety, "I'm nowise a man to speak out of my place. As the psalm says—

'I know what's right, nor only so,
But also practise what I know.'

"Well, then, I wish you'd keep hold o' the tune, when it's set for you ; if you're for practising, I wish you'd practise that," said a large jocose-looking man, an excellent wheelwright in his week-day capacity, but on Sundays leader of the choir. He winked, as he spoke, at two of the company, who were known officially as the "bassoon" and the "key-bugle," in the confidence that he was expressing the sense of the musical profession in Raveloe.

Mr Tookey, the deputy-clerk, who shared the unpopu-

larity common to deputies, turned very red, but replied, with careful moderation—"Mr Winthrop, if you'll bring me any proof as I'm in the wrong, I'm not the man to say, I won't alter. But there's people set up their own ears for a standard, and expect the whole choir to follow 'em. There may be two opinions, I hope."

"Ay, ay," said Mr Macey, who felt very well satisfied with this attack on youthful presumption; "you're right there, Tookey: there's allays two 'pinions; there's the 'pinion a
 10 man has of himsen, and there's the 'pinion other folks have on him. There'd be two 'pinions about a cracked bell, if the bell could hear itself."

"Well, Mr Macey," said poor Tookey, serious amidst the general laughter, "I undertook to partially fill up the office of pātish-clerk by Mr Crackenthorp's desire, whenever your infirmities should make you unfitting; and it's one of the rights thereof to sing in the choir—else why have you done the same yourself?"

"Ah! but the old gentleman and you are two folks," said
 20 Ben Winthrop. "The old gentleman's got a gift. Why, the Squire used to invite him to take a glass, only to hear him sing the 'Red Rovier'; didn't he, Mr Macey? It's a nat'ral gift. There's my little lad Aaron, he's got a gift—he can sing a tune off straight, like a throstle. But as for you, Master Tookey, you'd better stick to your 'Amens': your voice is well enough when you keep it up in your nose. It's your insidē as isn't right made for music: it's no better nor a hollow stalk."

This kind of unflinching frankness was the most piquant
 30 form of joke to the company at the Rainbow, and Ben Winthrop's insult was felt by everybody to have capped Mr Macey's epigram.

"I see what it is plain enough," said Mr Tookey, unable

to keep cool any longer. "There's a conspiracy to turn me out o' the choir, as I shouldn't share the Christmas money—that's where it is. But I shall speak to Mr Crackenthorp; I'll not be put upon by no man."

"Nay, nay, Tookey," said Ben Winthrop. "We'll pay you your share to keep out of it—that's what we'll do. There's things folks 'ud pay to be rid on, besides varmin."

"Come, come," said the landlord, who felt that paying people for their absence was a principle dangerous to society; "a joke's a joke. We're all good friends here, I hope. We must give and take. You're both right and you're both wrong, as I say. I agree wi' Mr Macey here, as there's two opinions; and if mine was asked, I should say they're both right. Tookey's right and Winthrop's right, and they've only got to split the difference and make themselves even."

The farrier was puffing his pipe rather fiercely, in some contempt at this trivial discussion. He had no ear for music himself, and never went to church, as being of the medical profession, and likely to be in requisition for delicate cows. But the butcher, having music in his soul, had listened with a divided desire for Tookey's defeat and for the preservation of the peace.

"To be sure," he said, following up the landlord's conciliatory view, "we're fond of our old clerk; it's nat'ral, and him used to be such a singer, and got a brother as is known for the first fiddler in this country-side. Eh, it's a pity but what Solomon lived in our village, and could give us a tune when we liked; eh, Mr Macey? I'd keep him in liver and lights for nothing—that I would."

"Ay, ay," said Mr Macey, in the height of complacency; "our family's been known for musiciahers as far back as

anybody can tell. But them things are dying out, as I tell Solomon every time he comes round ; there's no voices like what there used to be, and there's nobody remembers what we remember, if it isn't the old crows."

"Ay, you remember when first Mr Lammeter's father come into these parts, don't you, Mr Macey?" said the landlord.

"I should think I did," said the old man, who had now gone through that complimentary process necessary to bring
10 him up to the point of narration ; "and a fine old gentleman he was—as fine, and finer nor the Mr Lammeter as now is. He came from a bit north'ard, so far as I could ever make out. But there's nobody rightly knows about those parts : only it couldn't be far north'ard, nor much different from this country, for he brought a fine breed o' sheep with him, so there must be pastures there, and everything reasonable. We heared tell as he'd sold his own land to come and take the Warrens, and that seemed odd
20 for a man as had land of his own, to come and rent a farm in a strange place. But they said it was along of his wife's dying ; though there's reasons in things as nobody knows on—that's pretty much what I've made out ; yet some folks are so wise, they'll find you fifty reasons straight off, and all the while the real reason's winking at 'em in the corner, and they niver see't. Howsomever, it was soon seen as we'd got a new parish'ner as know'd the rights and customs o' things, and kep a good house, and was well looked on by everybody. And the young man—that's the Mr Lammeter as now is, for he'd niver a sister—soon begun to court Miss
30 Osgood, that's the sister o' the Mr Osgood as now is, and a fine handsome lass she was—eh, you can't think—they pretend this young lass is like her, but that's the way wi' people as don't know what come before 'em. I should

know, for I helped the old rector, Mr Drumlow as was, I helped him marry 'em."

Here Mr Macey paused: he always gave his narrative in instalments, expecting to be questioned according to precedent.

"Ay, and a partic'lar thing happened, didn't it, Mr Macey, so as you were likely to remember that marriage?" said the landlord, in a congratulatory tone.

"I should think there did—a *very* partic'lar thing," said Mr Macey, nodding sideways. "For Mr Drumlow—poor 10
old gentleman, I was fond on him, though he'd got a bit confused in his head, what wi' age and wi' taking a drop o' summat warm when the service come of a cold morning. And young Mr Lammeter, he'd have no way but he must be married in Janiuary, which, to be sure, 's a unreasonable time to be married in, for it isn't like a christening or a burying, as you can't help; and so Mr Drumlow—poor old gentleman, I was fond on him—but when he come to put the questions, he put 'em by the 20
rule o' contrairy, like, and he says, 'Wilt thou have this man to thy wedded wife?' says he, and then he says, 'Wilt thou have this woman to thy wedded husband?' says he. But the partic'larest thing of all is, as nobody took any notice on it but me, and they answered straight off 'yes,' like as if it had been me saying 'Amen' i' the right place, without listening to what went before."

"But *you* knew what was going on well enough, didn't you, Mr Macey? You were live enough, eh?" said the butcher.

"Lor bless you!" said Mr Macey, pausing, and smiling 30
in pity at the impotence of his hearer's imagination—"why, I was all of a tremble: it was as if I'd been a coat pulled by the two tails, like; for I couldn't stop the parson, I

couldn't take upon me to do that ; and yet I said to myself, I says, ' Suppose they shouldn't be fast married, 'cause the words are contrairy ? ' and my head went working like a mill, for I was allays uncommon for turning things over and seeing all round 'em ; and I says to myself, ' Is't the meanin' or the words as makes folks fast i' wedlock ? ' For the parson meant right, and the bride and bridegroom meant right. But then, when I come to think on it, meanin' goes but a little way i' most things, for you may mean to stick
 10 things together and your glue may be bad, and then where are you ? And so I says to mysen, ' It isn't the meanin', it's the glue.' And I was worreted as if I'd got three bells to pull at once, when we went into the vestry, and they begun to sign their names. But where's the use o' talking ? —you can't think what goes on in a 'cute man's inside."

" But you held in for all that, didn't you, Mr Macey ? " said the landlord.

" Ay, I held in tight till I was by mysen wi' Mr Drumlow, and then I out wi' everything, but respectful, as I allays
 20 did. And he made light on it, and he says, ' Pooh, pooh, Macey, make yourself easy,' he says ; ' it's neither the meaning nor the words—its the regester does it—that's the glue.' So you see he settled it easy ; for parsons and doctors know everything by heart, like, so as they aren't worreted wi' thinking what's the rights and wrongs o' things, as I'n been many and many's the time. And sure enough the wedding turned out all right, on'y poor Mrs Lammeter—that's Miss Osgood as was—died afore the lasses was growed up ; but for prosperity and everything respectable,
 30 there's no family mora' looked on."

Every one of Mr Macey's audience had heard this story many times, but it was listened to as if it had been a favourite tune, and at certain points the puffing of the pipes

was momentarily suspended, that the listeners might give their whole minds to the expected words. But there was more to come; and Mr Snell, the landlord, duly put the leading question.

"Why, old Mr Lammeter had a pretty fortin, didn't they say, when he come into these parts?"

"Well, yes," said Mr Macey; "but I daresay it's as much as this Mr Lammeter's done to keep it whole. For there was allays a talk as nobody could get rich on the Warrens: though he holds it cheap, for it's what they call 10 Charity Land."

"Ay, and there's few folks know so well as you how it come to be Charity Land, eh, Mr Macey?" said the butcher.

"How should they?" said the old clerk, with some contempt. "Why, my grandfather made the grooms' livery for that Mr Cliff as came and built the big stables at the Warrens. Why, they're stables four times as big as Squire Cass's, for he thought o' nothing but hosses and hunting, Cliff didn't—a Lunnon tailor, some folks said, as had gone 20 mad wi' cheating. For he couldn't ride; lor bless you! they said he'd got no more grip o' the hess than if his legs had been cross sticks: my grandfather heared old Squire Cass say so many and many a time. But ride he would as if Old Harry had been a-driving him; and he'd a son, a lad o' sixteen; and nothing would his father have him do, but he must ride and ride—though the lad was frightened, they said. And it was a common saying as the father wanted to ride the tailor out o' the lad, and make a gentleman on him—not but what I'm a tailor myself, but in 30 respect as God made me such, I'm proud on it, for 'Macey, tailor,' 's been wrote up over our door since afore the Queen's heads went out on the shillings. But Cliff, he

was ashamed o' being called a tailor, and he was sore vexed as his riding was laughed at, and nobody o' the gentlefolks hereabout could abide him. Howsomever, the poor lad got sickly and died, and the father didn't live long after him, for he got queerer nor ever, and they said he used to go out i' the dead o' the night, wi' a lantern in his hand, to the stables, and set a lot o' lights burning, for he got as he couldn't sleep; and there he'd stand, cracking his whip and looking at his hosses; and they said it was a mercy, as the stables didn't get burnt down wi' the poor dumb creaturs in 'em. But at last he died raving, and they found as he'd left all his property, Warrens and all, to a Lunnon Charity, and that's how the Warrens come to be Charity Land; though, as for the stables, Mr Lammeter never uses 'em—they're out o' all charicter—lor bless you! if you was to set the doors a-banging in 'em, it 'ud sound like thunder half o'er the parish."

"Ay, but there's more going on in the stables than what folks see by daylight, eh, Mr Macey?" said the landlord.

"Ay, ay; go that way of a dark night, that's all," said Mr Macey, winking mysteriously, "and then make believe, if you like, as you didn't see lights i' the stables, nor hear the stamping o' the hosses, nor the cracking o' the whips, and howling, too, if it's tow'rt daybreak. 'Cliff's Holiday' has been the name of it ever sin' I were a boy; that's to say, some said as it was the holiday Old Harry gev him from roasting, like. That's what my father told me, and he was a reasonable man, though there's folks nowadays know what happened afore they were born better nor they know their own business."

"What do you say to that, eh, Dowlas?" said the landlord, turning to the farrier, who was swelling with impatience for his cue. "There's a nut for *you* to crack."

Mr Dowlas was the negative spirit in the company, and was proud of his position.

"Say? I say what a man *should* say as doesn't shut his eyes to look at a finger-post. I say, as I'm ready to wager any man ten pound, if he'll stand out wi' me any dry night in the pasture before the Warren stables, as we shall neither see lights nor hear noises, if it isn't the blowing of our own noses. That's what I say, and I've said it many a time; but there's nobody 'ull ventur a ten-pun' note on their ghos'es as they make so sure of."

10

"Why, Dowlas, that's easy betting, that is," said Ben Winthrop. "You might as well bet a man as he wouldn't catch the rheumatise if he stood up to 's neck in the pool of a frosty night. It 'ud be fine fun for a man to win his bet as he'd catch the rheumatise. Folks as believe in Cliff's Holiday aren't agoing to ventur near it for a matter o' ten pound."

"If Master Dowlas wants to know the truth on it," said Mr Macey, with a sarcastic smile, tapping his thumbs together, "he's no call to lay any bet—let him go and stan' by himself—there's nobody 'ull hinder him; and then he can let the parish'ners know if they're wrong."

20

"Thank you! I'm obliged to you," said the farrier, with a snort of scorn. "If folks are fools, it's no business o' mine. I don't want to make out the truth about ghos'es: I know it already. But I'm not against a bet—everything fair and open. Let any man bet me ten pound as I shall see Cliff's Holiday, and I'll go and stand by myself. I want no company. I'd as lief do it as I'd fill this pipe."

30

"Ah, but who's to watch you, Dowlas, and see you do it? That's no fair bet," said the butcher.

"No fair bet?" replied Mr Dowlas, angrily. "I should

like to hear any man stand up and say I want to bet unfair. Come now, Master Lundy, I should like to hear you say it."

"Very like you would," said the butcher. "But it's no business o' mine. You're none o' my bargains, and I aren't a-going to try and 'bate your price. If anybody 'll bid for you at your own wallying, let him. I'm for peace and quietness, I am."

10 "Yes, that's what every yapping cur is, when you hold a stick up at him," said the farrier. "But I'm afraid o' neither man nor ghost, and I'm ready to lay a fair bet. I aren't a turn-tail cur."

"Ay, but there's this in it, Dowlas," said the landlord, speaking in a tone of much candour and tolerance. "There's folks, i' my opinion, they can't see ghos'es, not if they stood as plain as a pike-staff before 'em. And there's reason i' that. For there's my wife, now, can't smell, not if she'd the strongest o' cheese under her nose. I never see'd a ghost myself; but then I says to myself,
20 'Very like I haven't got the smell for 'em.' I mean, putting a ghost for a smell, or else contrairiways. And so, I'm for holding with both sides; for, as I say, the truth lies between 'em. And if Dowlas was to go and stand, and say he'd never seen a wink o' Cliff's Holiday all the night through, I'd back him; and if anybody said as Cliff's Holiday was certain sure for all that, I'd back *him* too. For the smell's what I go by."

The landlord's analogical argument was not well received by the farrier—a man intensely opposed to compromise.

30 "Tut, tut," he said, setting down his glass with refreshed irritation; "what's the smell got to do with it? Did ever a ghost give a man a black eye? That's what I should like to know. If ghos'es want me to believe in 'em, let

'em leave off skulking i' the dark and i' lone places—let 'em come where there's company and candles."

"As if ghos'es 'ud want to be believed in by anybody so ignirant!" said Mr Macey, in deep disgust at the farrier's crass incompetence to apprehend the conditions of ghostly phenomena.—*Silas Marner*.

h. THE ROBBERY.

The next morning the whole village was excited by the story of the robbery, and Godfrey, like every one else, was occupied in gathering and discussing news about it, and in visiting the Stone-pits. The rain had washed away all possibility of distinguishing foot-marks, but a close investigation of the spot had disclosed, in the direction opposite to the village, a tinder-box, with a flint and steel, half sunk in the mud. It was not Silas's tinder-box, for the only one he had ever had was still standing on his shelf; and the inference generally accepted was, that the tinder-box in the ditch was somehow connected with the robbery. A small minority shook their heads, and intimated their opinion that it was not a robbery to have much light thrown on it by tinder-boxes, that Master Marner's tale had a queer look with it, and that such things had been known as a man's doing himself a mischief, and then setting the justice to look for the doer. But when questioned closely as to their grounds for this opinion, and what Master Marner had to gain by such false pretences, they only shook their heads as before, and observed that there was no knowing what some folks counted gain; moreover, that everybody had a right to their own opinions, grounds or no grounds, and that the weaver, as everybody knew, was partly crazy. Mr Macey, though he joined in 30

the defence of Marner against all suspicions of deceit, also pooh-poohed the tinder-box; indeed, repudiated it as a rather impious suggestion, tending to imply that everything must be done by human hands, and that there was no power which could make away with the guineas without moving the bricks. Nevertheless, he turned round rather sharply on Mr Tookey, when the zealous deputy, feeling that this was a view of the case peculiarly suited to a parish-clerk, carried it still further, and doubted whether
10 it was right to inquire into a robbery at all when the circumstances were so mysterious.

"As if," concluded Mr Tookey—"as if there was nothing but what could be made out by justices and constables."

"Now, don't you be for overshooting the mark, Tookey," said Mr Macey, nodding his head aside admonishingly. "That's what you're allays at: if I throw a stone and hit, you think there's summat better than hitting, and you try to throw a stone beyond. What I said was against
20 the tinder-box: I said nothing against justices and constables, for they're o' King George's making, and it 'ud be ill-becoming a man in a parish office to fly out again' King George."

While these discussions were going on amongst the group outside the Rainbow, a higher consultation was being carried on within, under the presidency of Mr Crackenthorp, the rector, assisted by Squire Cass and other substantial parishioners. It had just occurred to Mr Snell, the landlord—he being, as he observed, a man accustomed
30 to put two and two together—to connect with the tinder-box, which, as deputy-constable, he himself had had the honourable distinction of finding, certain recollections of a pedlar who had called to drink at the house about a

month before, and had actually stated that he carried a tinder-box about with him to light his pipe. Here, surely, was a clue to be followed out. And as memory, when duly impregnated with ascertained facts, is sometimes surprisingly fertile, Mr Snell gradually recovered a vivid impression of the effect produced on him by the pedlar's countenance and conversation. He had a "look with his eye" which fell unpleasantly on Mr Snell's sensitive organism. To be sure, he didn't say anything particular—no, except that about the tinder-box—but it isn't what a man 10 says, it's the way he says it. Moreover, he had a swarthy foreignness of complexion which boded little honesty.

"Did he wear earrings?" Mr Crackenthorp wished to know, having some acquaintance with foreign customs.

"Well—stay—let me see," said Mr Snell, like a docile clairvoyante, who would really not make a mistake if she could help it. After stretching the corners of his mouth and contracting his eyes, as if he were trying to see the earrings, he appeared to give up the effort, and said, "Well, he'd got earrings in his box to sell, so it's nat'ral 20 to suppose he might wear 'em. But he called at every house, a'most, in the village: there's somebody else, mayhap, saw 'em in his ears, though I can't take upon me rightly to say."

Mr Snell was correct in his surmise, that somebody else would remember the pedlar's earrings. For on the spread of inquiry among the villagers it was stated with gathering emphasis that the parson had wanted to know whether the pedlar wore earrings in his ears, and an impression was created that a great deal depended on the eliciting of 30 this fact. Of course, every one who heard the question, not having any distinct image of the pedlar as *without* earrings, immediately had an image of him *with* earrings,

larger or smaller, as the case might be; and the image was presently taken for a vivid recollection, so that the glazier's wife, a well-intentioned woman, not given to lying, and whose house was among the cleanest in the village, was ready to declare, as sure as ever she meant to take the sacrament the very next Christmas that was ever coming, that she had seen big earrings, in the shape of the young moon, in the pedlar's two ears; while Jinny Oates, the cobbler's daughter, being a more imaginative person, stated
10 not only that she had seen them too, but that they had made her blood creep, as it did at that very moment while there she stood.

Also, by way of throwing further light on this clue of the tinder-box, a collection was made of all the articles purchased from the pedlar at various houses, and carried to the Rainbow to be exhibited there. In fact, there was a general feeling in the village that for the clearing-up of this robbery there must be a great deal done at the Rainbow, and that no man need offer his wife an excuse for
20 going there while it was the scene of severe public duties.

Some disappointment was felt, and perhaps a little indignation also, when it became known that Silas Marner, on being questioned by the Squire and the parson, had retained no other recollection of the pedlar than that he had called at his door, but had not entered his house, having turned away at once when Silas, holding the door ajar, had said that he wanted nothing. This had been Silas's testimony, though he clutched strongly at the idea of the pedlar's being the culprit, if only because it gave
30 him a definite image of a whereabouts for his gold after it had been taken away from its hiding-place: he could see it now in the pedlar's box. But it was observed with some irritation in the village that anybody but a "blind

creatur" like Marner would have seen the man prowling about, for how came he to leave his tinder-box in the ditch close by, if he hadn't been lingering there? Doubtless, he had made his observations when he saw Marner at the door. Anybody might know—and only look at him—that the weaver was a half-crazy miser. It was a wonder the pedlar hadn't murdered him; men of that sort, with rings in their ears, had been known for murderers, often and often; there had been one tried at the 'sises, not so long ago but what there were people living who 10 remembered it.

Godfrey Cass, indeed, entering the Rainbow during one of Mr Snell's frequently repeated recitals of his testimony, had treated it lightly, stating that he himself had bought a penknife of the pedlar, and thought him a merry, grinning fellow enough; it was all nonsense, he said, about the man's evil looks. But this was spoken of in the village as the random talk of youth, "as if it was only Mr Snell who had seen something odd about the pedlar!" On the contrary, there were at least half-a-dozen who were ready 20 to go before Justice Malam, and give in much more striking testimony than any the landlord could furnish. It was to be hoped Mr Godfrey would not go to Tarley and throw cold water on what Mr Snell said there, and so prevent the justice from drawing up a warrant. He was suspected of intending this, when, after mid-day, he was seen setting off on horseback in the direction of Tarley.

Justice Malam was naturally regarded in Tarley and Raveloe as a man of capacious mind, seeing that he could draw much wider conclusions without evidence than could 30 be expected of his neighbours who were not on the Commission of the Peace. Such a man was not likely to neg-

lect the clue of the tinder-box, and an inquiry was set on foot concerning a pedlar, name unknown, with curly black hair and a foreign complexion, carrying a box of cutlery and jewellery, and wearing large rings in his ears. But either because inquiry was too slow-footed to overtake him, or because the description applied to so many pedlars that inquiry did not know how to choose among them, weeks passed away, and there was no other result concerning the robbery than a gradual cessation of the excitement it had
 10 caused in Raveloc. . . .

When the robbery was talked of at the Rainbow and elsewhere, in good company, the balance continued to waver between the rational explanation founded on the tinder-box and the theory of an impenetrable mystery that mocked investigation. The advocates of the tinder-box-and-pedlar view considered the other side a muddle-headed and credulous set, who, because they themselves were wall-eyed, supposed everybody else to have the same blank outlook; and the adherents of the inexplicable more
 20 than hinted that their antagonists were animals inclined to crow before they had found any corn—mere skimming-dishes in point of depth—whose clear-sightedness consisted in supposing there was nothing behind a barn-door because they couldn't see through it; so that, though their controversy did not serve to elicit the fact concerning the robbery, it elicited some true opinions of collateral importance.—*Ibid.*
 27

VI. LOVERS.

a. ADAM BEDE AND DINAH MORRIS.

It was about three o'clock when Adam entered the farm-yard and roused Alick and the dogs from their Sunday dozing. Alick said everybody was gone to church "but th' young missis"—so he called Dinah; but this did not disappoint Adam, although the "everybody" was so liberal as to include Nancy the dairymaid, whose works of necessity were not unfrequently incompatible with church-going.

There was perfect stillness about the house: the doors were all closed, and the very stones and tubs seemed quieter than usual. Adam heard the water gently dripping from the pump—that was the only sound; and he knocked at the house door rather softly, as was suitable in that stillness. 10

The door opened, and Dinah stood before him, colouring deeply with the great surprise of seeing Adam at this hour, when she knew it was his regular practice to be at church. Yesterday he would have said to her without any difficulty, "I came to see you, Dinah: I knew the rest were not at home." But to-day something prevented him from saying that, and he put out his hand to her in 20
silence. Neither of them spoke, and yet both wished they could speak, as Adam entered, and they sat down.

Dinah took the chair she had just left ; it was at the corner of the table near the window, and there was a book lying on the table, but it was not open : she had been sitting perfectly still, looking at the smallⁿ bit of clear fire in the bright grate. Adam sat down opposite her, in Mr Poyser's three-cornered chair.

"Your mother is not ill again, I hope, Adam?" Dinah said, recovering herself. "Seth said she was well this morning."

10 "No, she's very hearty to-day," said Adam, happy in the signs of Dinah's feeling at the sight of him, but shy.

"There's nobody at home, you see," Dinah said; "but you'll wait. You've been hindered from going to church to-day, doubtless."

"Yes," Adam said, and then paused, before he added, "I was thinking about you : that was the reason."

This confession was very awkward and sudden, Adam felt ; for he thought Dinah must understand all he meant. But the frankness of the words caused her immediately to
20 interpret them into a renewal of his brotherly regrets that she was going away, and she answered calmly—

"Do not be careful and troubled for me, Adam. I have all things and abound at Snowfield. And my mind is at rest, for I am not seeking my own will in going."

"But if things were different, Dinah," said Adam, hesitatingly—"if you knew things that perhaps you don't know now"

Dinah looked at him inquiringly, but instead of going on, he reached a chair and brought it near the corner of
30 the table where she was sitting. She wondered and was afraid—and the next moment her thoughts flew to the past : was it something about those distant unhappy ones that she didn't know?

Adam looked at her: it was so sweet to look at her eyes, which had now a self-forgetful questioning in them,—for a moment he forgot that he wanted to say anything, or that it was necessary to tell her what he meant.

“Dinah,” he said suddenly, taking both her hands between his, “I love you with my whole heart and soul. I love you next to God who made me.”

Dinah’s lips became pale, like her cheeks, and she trembled violently under the shock of painful joy. Her hands were cold as death between Adam’s. She could not draw them away, because he held them fast. 10

“Don’t tell me you can’t love me, Dinah. Don’t tell me we must part, and pass our lives away from one another.”

The tears were trembling in Dinah’s eyes, and they fell before she could answer. But she spoke in a quiet low voice.

“Yes, dear Adam, we must submit to another Will. We must part.”

“Not if you love me, Dinah—not if you love me,” 20 Adam said, passionately. “Tell me—tell me if you can love me better than a brother?”

Dinah was too entirely reliant on the Supreme guidance to attempt to achieve any end by a deceptive concealment. She was recovering now from the first shock of emotion, and she looked at Adam with simple sincere eyes as she said—

“Yes, Adam, my heart is drawn strongly towards you; and of my own will, if I had no clear showing to the contrary, I could find my happiness in being near you, and ministering to you continually. I fear I should forget to rejoice and weep with others; nay, I fear I should forget the Divine presence, and seek no love but yours.” 30

Adam did not speak immediately. They sat looking at each other in delicious silence, — for the first sense of mutual love excludes other feelings; it will have the soul all to itself.

“Then, Dinah,” Adam said at last, “how can there be anything contrary to what’s right in our belonging to one another, and spending our lives together? Who put this great love into our hearts? Can anything be holier than that? For we can help one another in everything as is
10 good. I’d never think o’ putting myself between you and God, and saying you oughtn’t to do this, and you’ oughtn’t to do that. You’d follow your conscience as much as you do now.”

“Yes, Adam,” Dinah said, “I know marriage is a holy state for those who are truly called to it, and have no other drawing; but from my childhood upward I have been led towards another path; all my peace and my joy have come from having no life of my own, no wants, no wishes for myself, and living only in God and those of His
20 creatures whose sorrows and joys He has given me to know. Those have been very blessed years to me, and I feel that if I was to listen to any voice that would draw me aside from that path, I should be turning my back on the light that has shone upon me, and darkness and doubt would take hold of me. We could not bless each other, Adam, if there were doubts in my soul, and if I yearned, when it was too late, after that better part which had once been given me and I had put away from me.”

“But if a new feeling has come into your mind, Dinah,
30 and if you love me so as to be willing to be nearer to me than to other people, isn’t that a sign that it’s right for you to change your life? Doesn’t the love make it right when nothing else would?”

"Adam, my mind is full of questionings about that ; for now, since you tell me of your strong love towards me, what was clear to me has become dark again. I felt before that my heart was too strongly drawn towards you, and that your heart was not as mine ; and the thought of you had taken hold of me, so that my soul had lost its freedom, and was becoming enslaved to an earthly affection, which made me anxious and careful about what should befall myself. For in all other affection I had been content with any small return, or with none ; but my heart was beginning to hunger after an equal love from you. And I had no doubt that I must wrestle against that as a great temptation ; and the command was clear that I must go away."

"But now, dear, dear Dinah, now you know I love you better than you love me . . . it's all different now. You won't think o' going : you'll stay, and be my dear wife, and I shall thank God for giving me my life as I never thanked Him before."

"Adam, it's hard to me to turn a deaf ear. . . . you know it's hard ; but a great fear is upon me. It seems to me as if you were stretching out your arms to me, and beckoning me to come and take my ease, and live for my own delight, and Jesus, the Man of Sorrows, was standing looking towards me, and pointing to the sinful, and suffering, and afflicted. I have seen that again and again when I have been sitting in stillness and darkness, and a great terror has come upon me lest I should become hard, and a lover of self, and no more bear willingly the Redeemer's cross."

30

Dinah had closed her eyes, and a faint shudder went through her. "Adam," she went on, "you wouldn't desire that we should seek a good through any unfaithfulness to

the light that is in us ; you wouldn't believe that could be a good. We are of one mind in that."

"Yes, Dinah," said Adam, sadly, "I'll never be the man t' urge you against your conscience. But I can't give up the hope that you may come to see different. I don't believe your loving me could shut up your heart ; it's only adding to what you've been before, not taking away from it ; for it seems to me it's the same with love and happiness as with sorrow—the more we know of it the better we
10 can feel what other people's lives are or might be, and so we shall only be more tender to 'em, and wishful to help 'em. The more knowledge a man has, the better he'll do's work ; and feeling's a sort o' knowledge."

Dinah was silent ; her eyes were fixed in contemplation of something visible only to herself. Adam went on presently with his pleading—

"And you can do almost as much as you do now. I won't ask you to go to church with me of a Sunday ; you shall go where you like among the people, and teach 'em ;
20 for though I like church best, I don't put my soul above yours, as if my words was better for you to follow than your own conscience. And you can help the sick just as much, and you'll have more means o' making 'em a bit comfortable ; and you'll be among all your own friends as love you, and can help 'em and be a blessing to 'em till
their dying day. Surely, Dinah, you'd be as near to God as if you was living lonely and away from me."

Dinah made no answer for some time. Adam was still holding her hands, and looking at her with almost trembling anxiety, when she turned her grave loving eyes on
30 his, and said, in rather a sad voice—

"Adam, there is truth in what you say, and there's many of the brethren and sisters who have greater strength than

I have, and find their hearts enlarged by the cares of husband and kindred. But I have not faith that it would be so with me, for since my affections have been set above measure on you, I have had less peace and joy in God ; I have felt as it were a division in my heart. And think how it is with me, Adam : that life I have led is like a land I have trodden in blessedness since my childhood ; and if I long for a moment to follow the voice which calls me to another land that I know not, I cannot but fear that my soul might hereafter yearn for that early blessedness which I had forsaken ; and where doubt enters, there is not perfect love. I must wait for clearer guidance : I must go from you, and we must submit ourselves entirely to the Divine Will. We are sometimes required to lay our natural, lawful affections on the altar." 10

Adam dared not plead again, for Dinah's was not the voice of caprice and insincerity. But it was very hard for him ; his eyes got dim as he looked at her.

"But you may come to feel satisfied . . . to feel that you may come to me again, and we may never part, Dinah?" 20

"We must submit ourselves, Adam. With time, our duty will be made clear. It may be, when I have entered on my former life, I shall find all these new thoughts and wishes vanish, and become as things that were not. Then I shall know that my calling is not towards marriage. But we must wait."

"Dinah," said Adam, mournfully, "you can't love me so well as I love you, else you'd have no doubts. But it's natural you shouldn't ; for I'm not so good as you. I can't doubt it's right for me to love the best thing God's ever given me to know." 30

"Nay, Adam ; it seems to me that my love for you is

not weak ; for my heart waits on your words and looks, almost as a little child waits on the help and tenderness of the strong ~~on~~ whom it depends. If the thought of you took slight hold of me, I should not fear that it would be an idol in the temple. But you will strengthen me—you will not hinder me in seeking to obey to the uttermost.”

• “Let us go out into the sunshine, Dinah, and walk together. I’ll speak no word to disturb you.”

They went out and walked towards the fields, where they
10 would meet the family coming from church. Adam said, “Take my arm, Dinah,” and she took it. That was the only change in their manner to each other since they were last walking together. But no sadness in the prospect of her going away—in the uncertainty of the issue—could rob the sweetness from Adam’s sense that Dinah loved him. He thought he would stay at the Hall Farm all that evening. He would be near her as long as he could.

It was more than two o’clock in the afternoon when Adam came in sight of the grey town on the hill-side, and looked
20 searchingly towards the green valley below, for the first glimpse of the old thatched roof near the ugly red mill. The scene looked less harsh in the soft October sunshine than it had done in the eager time of early spring ; and the one grand charm it possessed in common with all wide-stretching woodless regions—that it filled you with a new consciousness of the overarching sky—had a milder, more soothing influence than usual, on this almost cloudless day. Adam’s doubts and fears melted under this influence as the delicate web-like clouds had gradually melted away into the
30 clear blue above him. He seemed to see Dinah’s gentle face assuring him, with its looks alone, of all he longed to know.

He did not expect Dinah to be at home at this hour, but he got down from his horse and tied it at the little gate, that he might ask where she was gone to-day. He had set his mind on following her and bringing her home. She was gone to Sloman's End, a hamlet about three miles off, over the hill, the old woman told him : had set off directly after morning chapel, to preach in a cottage there, as her habit was. Anybody at the town would tell him the way to Sloman's End. So Adam got on his horse again and rode to the town, putting up at the old inn, and taking a hasty dinner there in the company of the too chatty landlord, from whose friendly questions and reminiscences he was glad to escape as soon as possible, and set out towards Sloman's End. With all his haste, it was nearly four o'clock before he could set off, and he thought that as Dinah had gone so early, she would perhaps already be near returning. The little, grey, desolate-looking hamlet, unscreened by sheltering trees, lay in sight long before he reached it ; and as he came near he could hear the sound of voices singing a hymn. "Perhaps that's the last hymn before they come away," Adam thought : "I'll walk back a bit, and turn again to meet her, farther off the village." He walked back till he got nearly to the top of the hill again, and seated himself on a loose stone, against the low wall, to watch till he should see the little black figure leaving the hamlet and winding up the hill. He chose this spot, almost at the top of the hill, because it was away from all eyes—no house, no cattle, not even a nibbling sheep near—no presence but the still lights and shadows, and the great embracing sky.

She was much longer coming than he expected : he waited an hour at least watching for her and thinking of her, while the afternoon shadows lengthened, and the light

grew softer. At last he saw the little black figure coming from between the grey houses, and gradually approaching the foot of the hill. Slowly, Adam thought; but Dinah was really walking at her usual pace, with a light quiet step. Now she was beginning to wind along the path up the hill, but Adam would not move yet: he would not meet her too soon; he had set his heart on meeting her in this assured loneliness. And now he began to fear lest he should startle her too much; "Yet," he thought, "she's not one to be
 10 overstartled; she's always so calm and quiet, as if she was prepared for anything."

What was she thinking of as she wound up the hill? Perhaps she had found complete repose without him, and had ceased to feel any need of his love. On the verge of a decision we all tremble: hope pauses with fluttering wings.

But now at last she was very near, and Adam rose from the stone wall. It happened that just as he walked forward Dinah had paused and turned round to look back at the village: who does not pause and look back in mounting
 20 a hill? Adam was glad; for, with the fine instinct of a lover, he felt that it would be best for her to hear his voice before she saw him. He came within three paces of her and then said, "Dinah!" She started without looking round, as if she connected the sound with no place. "Dinah!" Adam said again. He knew quite well what was in her mind. She was so accustomed to think of impressions as purely spiritual monitions, that she looked for no material visible accompaniment of the voice.

But this second time she looked round. What a look of
 30 yearning love it was that the mild grey eyes turned on the strong dark-eyed man! She did not start again at the sight of him; she said nothing, but moved towards him so that his arm could clasp her round.

And they walked on so in silence, while the warm tears fell. Adam was content, and said nothing. It was Dinah who spoke first.

"Adam," she said, "it is the Divine Will. My soul is so knit to yours that it is but a divided life I live without you. And this moment, now you are with me, and I feel that our hearts are filled with the same love, I have a fulness of strength to bear and do our heavenly Father's Will, that I had lost before."

Adam paused and looked into her sincere eyes.

10

"Then we'll never part any more, Dinah, till death parts us."

And they kissed each other with a deep joy.

What greater thing is there for two human souls than to feel that they are joined for life—to strengthen each other in all labour, to rest on each other in all sorrow, to minister to each other in all pain, to be one with each other in silent unspeakable memories at the moment of the last parting?—*Adam Bede*.

b. MARY GARTH AND FRED VINCY.

"May I stay here a little, Mary, or shall I bore you?"

20

"Pray sit down," said Mary; "you will not be so heavy a bore as Mr John Waule, who was here yesterday, and he sat down without asking my leave."

"Poor fellow! I think he is in love with you."

"I am not aware of it. And to me it is one of the most odious things in a girl's life, that there must always be some supposition of falling in love coming between her and any man who is kind to her, and to whom she is grateful. I should have thought that I, at least, might have been safe from all that. I have no ground for the nonsensical

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vanity of fancying everybody who comes near me is in love with me."

Mary did not mean to betray any feeling, but in spite of herself she ended in a tremulous tone of vexation.

"Confound John Waule! I did not mean to make you angry. I didn't know you had any reason for being grateful to him. I forgot what a great service you think it if any one snuffs a candle for you." Fred also had his pride, and was not going to show that he knew what had called forth
 10 this outburst of Mary's.

"Oh, I am not angry, except with the ways of the world. I do like to be spoken to as if I had common-sense. I really often feel as if I could understand a little more than I ever hear even from young gentlemen who have been to college." Mary had recovered, and she spoke with a suppressed rippling under-current of laughter pleasant to hear.

"I don't care how merry you are at my expense this morning," said Fred, "I thought you looked so sad when
 20 you came upstairs. It is a shame you should stay here to be bullied in that way."

"Oh, I have an easy life—by comparison. I have tried being a teacher, and I am not fit for that: my mind is too fond of wandering on its own way. I think any hardship is better than pretending to do what one is paid for, and never really doing it. Everything here I can do as well as any one else could; perhaps better than some—Rosy, for example. Though she is just the sort of beautiful creature that is imprisoned with ogres in fairy tales."

30 "Rosy!" cried Fred, in a tone of profound brotherly scepticism.

"Come, Fred!" said Mary, emphatically; "you have no right to be so critical."

"Do you mean anything particular—just now?"

"No, I mean something general—always."

"Oh, that I am idle and extravagant. Well, I am not fit to be a poor man. I should not have made a bad fellow if I had been rich."

"You would have done your duty in that state of life to which it has not pleased God to call you," said Mary, laughing.

"Well, I couldn't do my duty as a clergyman, any more than you could do yours as a governess. You ought to have a little fellow-feeling there, Mary." 10

"I never said you ought to be a clergyman. There are other sorts of work. It seems to me very miserable not to resolve on some course and act accordingly."

"So I could, if——" Fred broke off, and stood up, leaning against the mantelpiece.

"If you were sure you should not have a fortune?"

"I did not say that. You want to quarrel with me. It is too bad of you to be guided by what other people say about me." 20

"How can I want to quarrel with you? I should be quarrelling with all my new books," said Mary, lifting the volume on the table. "However naughty you may be to other people, you are good to me."

"Because I like you better than any one else. But I know you despise me."

"Yes, I do—a little," said Mary, nodding, with a smile.

"You would admire a stupendous fellow, who would have wise opinions about everything." 30

"Yes, I should." Mary was sewing swiftly, and seemed provokingly mistress of the situation. When a conversation has taken a wrong turn for us, we only get farther and,

farther into the swamp of awkwardness. This was what Fred Vincy felt.

"I suppose a woman is never in love with any one she has always known—ever since she can remember; as a man often is. It is always some new fellow who strikes a girl."

"Let me see," said Mary, the corners of her mouth curling archly; "I must go back on my experience. There is Juliet—she seems an example of what you say. But
10 then Ophelia had probably known Hamlet a long while; and Brenda Troil—she had known Mordaunt Merlon ever since they were children; but then he seems to have been an estimable young man; and Minna was still more deeply in love with Cleveland, who was a stranger. Waverley was new to Flora MacIvor; but then she did not fall in love with him. And there are Olivia and Sophia Primrose, and Corinne—they may be said to have fallen in love with new men. Altogether, my experience is rather mixed."

20 Mary looked up with some roguishness at Fred, and that look of hers was very dear to him, though the eyes were nothing more than clear windows where observation sat laughingly. He was certainly an affectionate fellow, and as he had grown from boy to man, he had grown in love with his old playmate, notwithstanding that share in the higher education of the country which had exalted his views of rank and income.

"When a man is not loved, it is no use for him to say that he could be a better fellow—could do anything—I
30 mean, if he were sure of being loved in return."

"Not of the least use in the world for him to say he *could* be better. Might, could, would—they are contemptible auxiliaries."

"I don't see how a man is to be good for much unless he has some one woman to love him dearly."

"I think the goodness should come before he expects that."

"You know better, Mary. Women don't love men for their goodness."

"Perhaps not. But if they love them, they never think them bad."

"It is hardly fair to say I am bad."

"I said nothing at all about you."

10

"I never shall be good for anything, Mary, if you will not say that you love me—if you will not promise to marry me—I mean, when I am able to marry."

"If I did love you, I would not marry you: I would certainly not promise ever to marry you."

"I think that is quite wicked, Mary. If you love me, you ought to promise to marry me."

"On the contrary, I think it would be wicked in me to marry you even if I did love you."

"You mean, just as I am, without any means of maintaining a wife. Of course: I am but three-and-twenty."

20

"In that last point you will alter. But I am not so sure of any other alteration. My father says an idle man ought not to exist, much less be married."

"Then I am to blow my brains out?"

"No; on the whole I should think you would do better to pass your examination. I have heard Mr Farebrother say it is disgracefully easy."

"That is all very fine. Anything is easy to him. Not that cleverness has anything to do with it. I am ten times cleverer than many men who pass."

30

"Dear me!" said Mary, unable to repress her sarcasm.

"That accounts for the curates like Mr Crowse. Divide

your cleverness by ten, and the quotient—dear me!—is able to take a degree. But that only shows you are ten times more idle than the others.”

“Well, if I did pass, you would not want me to go into the Church?”

“That is not the question—what I want you to do. You have a conscience of your own, I suppose. There! there is Mr Lydgate. I must go and tell my uncle.”

“Mary,” said Fred, seizing her hand as she rose, “if
10 you will not give me some encouragement, I shall get worse instead of better.”

“I will not give you any encouragement,” said Mary, reddening. “Your friends would dislike it, and so would mine. My father would think it a disgrace to me if I accepted a man who got into debt, and would not work!”

Fred was stung, and released her hand. She walked to the door, but there she turned and said: “Fred, you have always been so good, so generous to me. I am not ungrateful. But never speak to me in that way again.”

20 “Very well,” said Fred, sulkily, taking up his hat and whip. His complexion showed patches of pale pink and dead white. Like many a plucked idle young gentleman, he was thoroughly in love, and with a plain girl, who had no money! But having Mr Featherstone’s land in the background, and a persuasion that, let Mary say what she would, she really did care for him, Fred was not utterly in despair.

Fred Vincy wanted to arrive at Stone Court when Mary could not expect him, and when his uncle was not down-
30 stairs: in that case she might be sitting alone in the wainscoted parlour. He left his horse in the yard to avoid making a noise on the gravel in front, and entered the

parlour without other notice than the noise of the door-handle. Mary was in her usual corner, laughing over Mrs Piozz's recollections of Johnson, and looked up with the fun still in her face. It gradually faded as she saw Fred approach her without speaking, and stand before her with his elbow on the mantelpiece, looking ill. She too was silent, only raising her eyes to him inquiringly.

"Mary," he began, "I am a good-for-nothing blackguard."

"I should think one of those epithets would do at a time," said Mary, trying to smile, but feeling alarmed. 10

"I know you will never think well of me any more. You will think me a liar. You will think me dishonest. You will think I didn't care for you, or your father and mother. You always do make the worst of me, I know."

"I cannot deny that I shall think all that of you, Fred, if you give me good reasons. But please to tell me at once what you have done. I would rather know the painful truth than imagine it."

"I owed money—a hundred and sixty pounds. I asked your father to put his name to a bill. I thought it would 20 not signify to him. I made sure of paying the money myself, and I have tried as hard as I could. And now, I have been so unlucky—a horse has turned out badly—I can only pay fifty pounds. And I can't ask my father for the money: he would not give me a farthing. And my uncle gave me a hundred a little while ago. 30 what can I do? And now your father has no ready money to spare, and your mother will have to pay away her ninety-two pounds that she has saved, and she says your savings must go too. You see what a——" 3

30

"Oh, poor mother, poor father!" said Mary, her eyes filling with tears, and a little sob rising which she tried to repress. She looked straight before her and took no notice

of Fred, all the consequences at home becoming present to her. He too remained silent for some moments, feeling more miserable than ever.

"I wouldn't have hurt you so for the world, Mary," he said at last. "You can never forgive me."

"What does it matter whether I forgive you?" said Mary, passionately. "Would that make it any better for my mother to lose the money she has been earning by lessons for four years, that she might send Alfred to Mr
10 Hanmer's? Should you think all that pleasant enough if I forgave you?"

"Say what you like, Mary. I deserve it all."

"I don't want to say anything," said Mary, more quietly; "my anger is of no use." She dried her eyes, threw aside her book, rose and fetched her sewing.

Fred followed her with his eyes, hoping that they would meet hers, and in that way find access for his imploring penitence. But no! Mary could easily avoid looking upward.

20 "I do care about your mother's money going," he said, when she was seated again and sewing quickly. "I wanted to ask you, Mary—don't you think that Mr Featherstone—if you were to tell him—tell him, I mean, about apprenticing Alfred—would advance the money?"

"My family is not fond of begging, Fred. We would rather work for our money. Besides, you say that Mr Featherstone has lately given you a hundred pounds. He rarely makes presents; he has never made presents to us. I am sure my father will not ask him for anything; and
30 even if I chose to beg of him, it would be of no use."

"I am so miserable, Mary—if you knew how miserable I am, you would be sorry for me."

"There are other things to be more sorry for than that.

But selfish people always think their own discomfort of more importance than anything else in the world: I see enough of that every day."

"It is hardly fair to call me selfish. If you knew what things other young men do, you would think me a good way off the worst."

"I know that people who spend a great deal of money on themselves without knowing how they shall pay, must be selfish. They are always thinking of what they can get for themselves, and not of what other people may lose." 10

"Any man may be unfortunate, Mary, and find himself unable to pay when he meant it. There is not a better man in the world than your father, and yet he got into trouble."

"How dare you make any comparison between my father and you, Fred?" said Mary, in a deep tone of indignation. "He never got into trouble by thinking of his own idle pleasures, but because he was always thinking of the work he was doing for other people. And he has fared hard, and worked hard to make good everybody's 20 loss."

"And you think that I shall never try to make good anything, Mary. It is not generous to believe the worst of a man. When you have got any power over him, I think you might try and use it to make him better; but that is what you never do. However, I'm going," Fred ended, languidly. "I shall never speak to you about anything again. I'm very sorry for all the trouble I've caused—that's all."

Mary had dropped her work out of her hand and looked 30 up. There is often something maternal even in a girlish love, and Mary's hard experience had wrought her nature to an impressibility very different from that hard slight

thing which we call girlishness. At Fred's last words she felt an instantaneous pang, something like what a mother feels at the imagined sobs or cries of her naughty truant child, which may lose itself and get harm. And when, looking up, her eyes met his dull despairing glance, her pity for him surmounted her anger and all her other anxieties.

"Oh, Fred, how ill you look! Sit down a moment. Don't go yet. Let me tell uncle that you are here. He
10 has been wondering that he has not seen you for a whole week." Mary spoke hurriedly, saying the words that came first without knowing very well what they were, but saying them in a half-soothing half-beseeching tone, and rising as if to go away to Mr Featherstone. Of course Fred felt as if the clouds had parted and a gleam had come: he moved and stood in her way.

"Say one word, Mary, and I will do anything. Say you will not think the worst of me—will not give me up altogether."

20 "As if it were any pleasure to me to think ill of you," said Mary, in a mournful tone. "As if it were not very painful to me to see you an idle frivolous creature. How can you bear to be so contemptible, when others are working and striving, and there are so many things to be done—how can you bear to be fit for nothing in the world that is useful? And with so much good in your disposition, Fred,—you might be worth a great deal."

"I will try to be anything you like, Mary, if you will say that you love me."

30 "I should be ashamed to say that I loved a man who must always be hanging on others, and reckoning on what they would do for him. What will you be when you are forty? Like Mr Bowyer, I suppose—just as idle, living in

Mrs Beck's front parlour—fat and shabby, hoping somebody will invite you to dinner—spending your morning in learning a comic song—oh no! learning a tune on the flute.”

Mary's lips had begun to curl with a smile as soon as she had asked that question about Fred's future (young souls are mobile), and before she ended her face had its full illumination of fun. To him it was like the cessation of an ache that Mary could laugh at him, and with a passive sort of smile he tried to reach her hand; but she slipped away quickly towards the door, and said, “I shall tell uncle. You *must* see him for a moment or two.” 10

Fred secretly felt that his future was guaranteed against the fulfilment of Mary's sarcastic prophecies, apart from that “anything” which he was ready to do if she would define it. He never dared in Mary's presence to approach the subject of his expectations from Mr Featherstone, and she always ignored them, as if everything depended on himself. But if ever he actually came into the property, she must recognise the change in his position. All this passed through his mind somewhat languidly, before he went up to see his uncle. He stayed but a little while, excusing himself on the ground that he had a cold; and Mary did not reappear before he left the house. . . . 20

When Caleb Garth arrived at Stone Court soon after dusk, Mary was not surprised, although he seldom had leisure for paying her a visit, and was not at all fond of having to talk with Mr Featherstone. The old man, on the other hand, felt himself ill at ease with a brother-in-law whom he could not annoy, who did not mind about being considered poor, had nothing to ask of him, and understood all kinds of farming and mining business better than he did. But Mary had felt sure that her parents would want to see, 30

her, and if her father had not come, she would have obtained leave to go home for an hour or two the next day. After discussing prices during tea with Mr Featherstone, Caleb rose to bid him good-bye, and said, "I want to speak to you, Mary."

She took a candle into another large parlour, where there was no fire, and setting down the feeble light on the dark mahogany table, turned round to her father, and putting her arms round his neck kissed him with childish kisses
 10 which he delighted in,—the expression of his large brows softening as the expression of a great beautiful dog softens when it is caressed. Mary was his favourite child, and whatever Susan might say, and right as she was on all other subjects, Caleb thought it natural that Fred or any one else should think Mary more lovable than other girls.

"I've got something to tell you, my dear," said Caleb in his hesitating way. "No very good news; but then it might be worse."

"About money, father? I think I know what it is."

20 "Ay? how can that be? You see, I've been a bit of a fool again, and put my name to a bill, and now it comes to paying; and your mother has got to part with her savings, that's the worst of it, and even they won't quite make things even. We wanted a hundred and ten pounds: your mother has ninety-two, and I have none to spare in the bank; and she thinks that you will have some savings."

"Oh yes; I have more than four-and-twenty pounds." I thought you would come, father, so I put it in my bag. See! beautiful white notes and gold."

30 Mary took out the folded money from her reticule and put it into her father's hand.

"Well, but how—we only want eighteen—here, put the rest back, child,—but how did you know about it?" said

Caleb, who, in his unconquerable indifference to money, was beginning to be chiefly concerned about the relation the affair might have to Mary's affections.

"Fred told me this morning."

"Ah! Did he come on purpose?"

Yes, I think so. He was a good deal distressed."

"I'm afraid Fred is not to be trusted, Mary," said the father, with hesitating tenderness. "He means better than he acts, perhaps. But I should think it a pity for anybody's happiness to be wrapped up in him, and so would your 10 mother."

"And so should I, father," said Mary, not looking up, but putting the back of her father's hand against her cheek.

"I don't want to pry, my dear. But I was afraid there might be something between you and Fred, and I wanted to caution you. You see, Mary"—here Caleb's voice became more tender; he had been pushing his hat about on the table and looking at it, but finally he turned his eyes on his daughter—"a woman, let her be as good as she may, has got to put up with the life her husband makes for 20 her. Your mother has had to put up with a good deal because of me."

Mary turned the back of her father's hand to her lips and smiled at him.

"Well, well, nobody's perfect, but"—here Mr Garth shook his head to help out the inadequacy of words—"what I am thinking of is—what it must be for a wife when she's never sure of her husband, when he hasn't got a principle in him to make him more afraid of doing the wrong thing by others than of getting his own toes pinched. 30 That's the long and the short of it, Mary. Young folks may get fond of each other before they know what life is, and they may think it all holiday if they can only get to

gether; but it soon turns into working day, my dear. However, you have more sense than most, and you haven't been kept in cotton-wool: there may be no occasion for me to say this, but a father trembles for his daughter, and you are all by yourself here."

"Don't fear for me, father," said Mary, gravely meeting her father's eyes; "Fred has always been very good to me; he is kind-hearted and affectionate, and not false, I think, with all his self-indulgence. But I will never engage myself
10 to one who has no manly independence, and who goes on loitering away his time on the chance that others will provide for him. You and my mother have taught me too much pride for that."

"That's right—that's right. Then I am easy," said Mr Garth, taking up his hat. "But it's hard to run away with your earnings, child."

"Father!" said Mary, in her deepest tone of remonstrance. "Take pocketfuls of love besides to them all at home," was her last word before he closed the outer door
20 on himself.

Mrs Garth, hearing Caleb enter the passage about tea-time, opened the parlour-door and said, "There you are, Caleb. Have you had your dinner?" (Mr Garth's meals were much subordinated to "business.")

"Oh yes, a good dinner—cold mutton and I don't know what. Where is Mary?"

"In the garden with Letty, I think."

"Fred is not come yet?"

"No. Are you going out again without taking tea,
30 Caleb?" said Mrs Garth, seeing that her absent-minded husband was putting on again the hat which he had just taken off.

"No, no ; I'm only going to Mary a minute."

Mary was in a grassy corner of the garden, where there was a swing loftily hung between two pear-trees. She had a pink kerchief tied over her head, making a little poke to shade her eyes from the level sunbeams, while she was giving a glorious swing to Letty, who laughed and screamed wildly.

Seeing her father, Mary left the swing and went to meet him, pushing back the pink kerchief and smiling afar off at him with the involuntary smile of loving pleasure. 10

"I came to look for you, Mary," said Mr Garth. "Let us walk about a bit."

Mary knew quite well that her father had something particular to say : his eyebrows made their pathetic angle, and there was a tender gravity in his voice : these things had been signs to her when she was Letty's age. She put her arm within his, and they turned by the row of nut-trees.

"It will be a sad while before you can be married, Mary," said her father, not looking at her, but at the end 20 of the stick which he held in his other hand.

"Not a sad while, father—I mean to be merry," said Mary, laughingly. "I have been single and merry for four-and-twenty years and more : I suppose it will not be quite as long again as that." Then, after a little pause, she said, more gravely, bending her face before her father's, "If you are contented with Fred?"

Caleb screwed up his mouth and turned his head aside wisely.

"Now, father, you did praise him last Wednesday. You 30 said he had an uncommon notion of stock, and a good eye for things."

"Did I?" said Caleb, rather slyly.

"Yes, I put it all down, and the date, *anno Domini*, and everything," said Mary. "You like things to be neatly booked. And then his behaviour to you, father, is really good ; he has a deep respect for you ; and it is impossible to have a better temper than Fred has."

"Ay, ay ; you want to coax me into thinking him a fine match."

"No, indeed, father. I don't love him because he is a fine match."

10 "What for, then ?"

"Oh, dear, because I have always loved him. I should never like scolding any one else so well ; and that is a point to be thought of in a husband."

"Your mind is quite settled, then, Mary?" said Caleb, returning to his first tone. "There's no other wish come into it since things have been going on as they have been of late?" (Caleb meant a great deal in that vague phrase ;) "because, better late than never. A woman must not force her heart—she'll do a man no good by that."

20 "My feelings have not changed, father," said Mary, calmly. "I shall be constant to Fred as long as he is constant to me. I don't think either of us could spare the other, or like any one else better, however much we might admire them. It would make too great a difference to us—like seeing all the old places altered, and changing the name for everything. We must wait for each other a long while ; but Fred knows that."

Instead of speaking immediately, Caleb stood still and screwed his stick on the grassy walk. Then he said, with
30 emotion in his voice, "Well, I've got a bit of news. What do you think of Fred going to live at Stone Court, and managing the land there?"

"How can that ever be, father?" said Mary, wonderingly.

"He would manage it for his aunt Bulstrode. The poor woman has been to me begging and praying. She wants to do the lad good, and it might be a fine thing for him. With saving, he might gradually buy the stock, and he has a turn for farming."

"Oh, Fred would be so happy! It is too good to believe."

"Ah, but mind you," said Caleb, turning his head warningly, "I must take it on my shoulders, and be responsible, and see after everything; and that will grieve 10 your mother a bit, though she mayn't say so. Fred had need be careful."

"Perhaps it is too much, father," said Mary, checked in her joy. "There would be no happiness in bringing you any fresh trouble."

"Nay, nay; work is my delight, child, when it doesn't vex your mother. And then, if you and Fred get married," here Caleb's voice shook just perceptibly, "he'll be steady and saving; and you've got your mother's cleverness, and mine too, in a woman's sort of way; and you'll keep him 20 in order. He'll be coming by-and-by, so I wanted to tell you first, because I think you'd like to tell him by yourselves. After that, I could talk it well over with him, and we could go into business and the nature of things."

"Oh, you dear good father!" cried Mary, putting her hands round her father's neck, while he bent his head placidly, willing to be caressed. "I wonder if any other girl thinks her father the best man in the world!"

"Nonsense, child; you'll think your husband better."

"Impossible," said Mary, relapsing into her usual tone; 30 "husbands are an inferior class of men, who require keeping in order."

When they were entering the house with Letty, who ha

run to join them, Mary saw Fred at the orchard-gate, and went to meet him.

"What fine clothes you wear, you extravagant youth!" said Mary, as Fred stood still and raised his hat to her with playful formality. "You are not learning economy."

"Now that is too bad, Mary," said Fred. "Just look at the edges of these coat-cuffs! It is only by dint of good brushing that I look respectable. I am saving up three suits—one for a wedding-suit."

10 "How very droll you will look!—like a gentleman in an old fashion-book."

"Oh no, they will keep two years."

"Two years! be reasonable, Fred," said Mary, turning to walk. "Don't encourage flattering expectations."

"Why not? One lives on them better than on unflattering ones. If we can't be married in two years, the truth will be quite bad enough when it comes."

"I have heard a story of a young gentleman who once encouraged flattering expectations, and they did him harm."

20 "Mary, if you've got something discouraging to tell me, I shall bolt; I shall go into the house to Mr Garth. I am out of spirits. My father is so cut up—home is not like itself. I can't bear any more bad news."

"Should you call it bad news to be told that you were to live at Stone Court, and manage the farm, and be remarkably prudent, and save money every year till all the stock and furniture were your own, and you were a distinguished agricultural character, as Mr Borthrop Trumbull says—rather stout, I fear, and with the Greek and Latin
30 sadly weather-worn?"

"You don't mean anything except nonsense, Mary," said Fred, colouring slightly nevertheless.

"That is what my father has just told me of as what

may happen, and he never talks nonsense," said Mary, looking up at Fred now, while he grasped her hand as they walked, till it rather hurt her; but she would not complain.

"Oh, I could be a tremendously good fellow then, Mary, and we could be married directly."

"Not so fast, sir; how do you know that I would not rather defer our marriage for some years? That would leave you time to misbehave, and then if I liked some one else better, I should have an excuse for jilting you." 10

"Pray don't joke, Mary," said Fred, with strong feeling. "Tell me seriously that all this is true, and that you are happy because of it—because you love me best."

"It is all true, Fred, and I am happy because of it—because I love you best," said Mary, in a tone of obedient recitation.

They lingered on the door-step under the steep-roofed porch, and Fred almost in a whisper said—

"When we were first engaged, with the umbrella-ring, Mary, you used to——" 20

The spirit of joy began to laugh more decidedly in Mary's eyes, but the fatal Ben came running to the door with Brownie yapping behind him, and, bouncing against them, said—

"Fred and Mary! are you ever coming in?—or may I eat your cake?"—*Middlemarch*, 1872. 26

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